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# Ordway's Salmon River Fishing Expedition

## Research Results for Summer 2002

July 1, 2003

STEVE F. RUSSELL, PH.D., P.E.  
Associate Professor  
Iowa State University

## **COVER**

Looking west down the Salmon River toward the mouth of Deer Creek. Wapshilla Ridge is the skyline.

Photo by Steve F. Russell

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Historic Trails Research  
Ames, Iowa

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by Steve F. Russell

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## Preface

This technical report documents my research on Ordway's salmon fishing excursion to the Salmon and Snake Rivers. This route has been a mystery for 200 years and previous research was sketchy at best. Two people have documented their research on this route. Idaho State Historian, Merle Wells, told me that his location was based upon reading the journals and marking his best estimate on a topo map. His time did not permit detailed field examinations. John J. Peebles shows his location on a very large scale map but his 1966 report did not document his methodology or describe how much field work he actually did on the route.

My field work was conducted over several summers. Initially, I did a lot of computer and GPS/GIS-aided studies of the probable routes and narrowed them down to ones I would eventually explore. I also used my knowledge of the trail the expedition followed when they first arrived in Kamiah in 1806 as well as the locations of historic Nez Perce camps and trails as documented in maps from the National Archives.

In 2002, I collaborated with Sam McNeill and John A. K. Barker on field work. They had received a grant from the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Assistance Grants which included coverage of expenses for helicopter flights and hiking logistics. John and I hiked down Deer Creek and down the ridge at Hoover Point. I did selected GPS measurements to an accuracy of about 15 meters.

As with any research, this is a work in progress and any input from other researchers is welcomed. The location accuracy of camps and trail tread can improve as more work and newer research and technology is applied. The reader should keep in mind that this is a research report intended to make the argument for the route and campsites chosen. As such, it contains a considerable amount of duplicate information because the arguments are made in different ways. The reader desiring a summary of the results should read the section 'Overview of the Trip and Route' and consult the maps.

This work should be used to update any existing records for the national historic trail or national historic landmark.

Steve F. Russell  
Ames, Iowa  
2003

## **Acknowledgments**

At the beginning of this effort, I was fortunate to meet two people who actively encouraged and supported my work, Shelley Kuther and Dick Southern; both of Craigmont, Idaho. Dick opened his home to me and drove me around the country so I could understand the transportation patterns that have existed since the homesteading days. Dick and Shelley maintain an excitement for the history of the area that is very contagious and I consider myself to be an adopted member of their community. We continue to keep in contact each summer.

There are many other people I would like to thank for assisting me when it was needed but, unfortunately, my records of their names was lost in a computer crash. Please forgive me for not listing you.

In the latter stages of my work, John A. K. Barker and Sam McNeill forged a partnership with me that resulted in a Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Assistance Grant and several days of well planned explorations of the route. Their assistance has been welcome and essential.

Finally, I wish to gratefully acknowledge the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Assistance Grant program from the State of Idaho and Keith Petersen, State Bicentennial Coordinator, for their financial support of this effort.

## Introduction

In late May of 1806, the Corps of discovery was camped along the north bank of the Clearwater River at Kamiah, Idaho. They were in keen anticipation of the coming of spring to the high country and the melting of snow along the Lolo Trail that would signal the start of their journey back to their homes in the eastern and Midwestern United States. They were busily engaged in gathering food supplies for their trip over the Lolo Trail as well as meeting their daily food needs at their “Long Camp.”

The Nez Perce, as well as Captains Lewis and Clark, were looking forward to the returning Salmon runs on the Snake, Salmon, and Clearwater Rivers. They no doubt knew that the salmon would run the Snake River first, followed by the Salmon and Clearwater Rivers. Since anticipation for obtaining salmon was high, the Captains decided to send sergeant John Ordway, and privates Robert Frazer (or Frazier), and Peter Weiser out to the Salmon River for a supply of salmon.

In the journals, we read that the sign that salmon would be returning was the cooing of the dove. The Captains were under the mistaken impression that the salmon were already running the Salmon River and that a short, half-day’s ride would take Ordway and party to a location where they could obtain salmon. However, it would eventually take them the better part of seven days to get the salmon and return safely.

The Journal entries for information on Ordway’s trip are summarized below. All pages and volume numbers refer to the Moulton edition of the journal, published by the University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, and edited by Gary E. Moulton. All dates are 1806.

Ordway - Volume 9: pages 315-319, May 27<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Lewis - Volume 7: page 291, May 27<sup>th</sup>; page 323, June 1<sup>st</sup>;

Clark - Volume 7: page 293, May 27<sup>th</sup>.

Gass - Volume 10: page 235, June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Journal - Volume 7: table on page 321, May 27<sup>th</sup>.

A generous number of research notes are given as endnotes at the end of this report. An endnote is marked in the text as: (§1). Comments on journal entries are given as footnotes. The following is a brief explanation of the purpose for each of the chapters in this report.

Research Methodology - This explains how I did the trail research for this report

Field Explorations - This is a summary of the ground truthing activities done for the Ordway route.

Overview of the Trip and Route - This is a brief summary of the route for each day and is intended to be a “quick read” of the research results. This chapter and the maps give all the essential information about the trip and route.

The Journey in Chronological Order - This is a more detailed presentation of the journal information. It is intended to provide the details of the route and my research for the reader who wants to study my work in relation to the journal information.

### **Ordway’s Salmon River Fishing Expedition - Research Results for 2002**



Distance Data - This is a line graph of the distances given in the journals as well as the actual distances from topographic maps. The reader can compare the agreements and differences.

Research Summary - My conclusions on the research results.

End Notes - Detailed comments about various issues encountered in the previous chapters. These notes give essential details about the research but would be too cumbersome to include in the body of the text.

Appendix-A Interpretive Narrative - This is a short summary of the route intended for inclusion in interpretive literature and/or newspaper articles.

Appendix-B Geographically Ordered Clues - A summary of the geographical clues from the journal given in proper order. This is an essential element of my research technique.

Appendix-C Journal Transcription with Notes - Actual journal entries with footnotes to further clarify my research conclusions.

Appendix-D Distribution List - People and organizations that received a copy of this report.

## **Research Methodology**

I begin my work on any particular segment of the Lewis and Clark Trail by doing an in-depth study of the original journals and maps. Then, I prepare a draft map of the trail courses, distances and various ordered geographic clues from the journals. The use of ordered geographic clues is essential to this work and I spend considerable time insuring that the order is correct. This estimated trail route is then entered into a computer database in preparation for the field work. Next, I study my extensive collection of National Archive maps covering the period 1840-1890 to see if there are any trails documented in the same area as the estimated trail route. If I find some, I correlate them with the computer database and further refine my estimate of the trail location. For example, the Ordway route has some segments in common with the trails used in the 1877 Nez Perce War. At this point, the existence of the tread and its location is conjecture because logging, road building, and ranching activities may have obliterated it in various locations.

The final phase is to do ground truthing through extensive field work. I spend several weeks each summer traveling the trail and searching for any trail tread segments that may still exist. I map existing trail tread segments using GPS and a GIS database system. Where no tread exists, I use an interpolation method to place the tread along the most topographically probable route between existing tread segments. Finally, I iterate the tread location determined by either the journal data or the ground truthing data until I have determined the trail location as accurately as possible. This end result becomes my final estimate of the trail location.

## Field Explorations

My field explorations of the Ordway route started several summers ago. I have explored the entire route wherever there is public access or permission from private land owners. My work began with an investigation of the route across the prairies and across Wapshilla Ridge. Initially, I traveled the length of Lawyer Creek to determine the practicality of the route and compared it to the sparse journal accounts. The journal mileages indicated that they went up on the prairie at Suzie Creek so I received permission from Flying B Ranch (west of Kamiah) to explore the ridge and I talked to the horse wranglers to find out what trails they used as access. They informed me that the route they often used to get to the prairie above was to go up the ridge to the west of Suzie Creek. Using the nearest access roads, I traveled the route that is mapped in this report and determined the best topographic locations according to my knowledge of trail routes.

Along the route from Nez Perce through Icicle Flat to the head of Deer Creek, I had help from Dick Southern of Craigmont. Dick provided lodging and transportation while he showed me the old pioneer towns and routes to orient me to some of the uses the country has seen in the last 100 years. After becoming familiar with the country, I made several additional trips along the route. Over the last two years, I have fine-tuned my estimates of the trail location and campsite locations.

In July of 2001, I made a 3-day float trip down the Salmon and Snake Rivers with a party led by Chuck Boyd and Jim Fazio. During this trip, I was able to get a good look at the topographic and trail situation at the mouths of Maloney, Deer, and Cottonwood Creeks. We hiked up the ridge at Maloney and hiked up the creek at Deer Creek. I was able to see from these explorations approximately where the trails were located on the lower ends of these creeks. The float trip also familiarized me with the ease or ruggedness of the route down the north side of the Salmon between Maloney and Wapshilla Creek. On the Snake River, we stopped at the mouth of Cottonwood Creek and I was able to hike around and search for the trails coming down off of each ridge. This site has a good bar that is an ancient Nez Perce habitation site. It is well above high water and good camping. I have read the book by 'river rat' Elmer Earl ("Hell's Canyon - A River Trip") where he said the rapids at the mouth of Cottonwood Creek were the worst ones at high water time between the mouth of the Salmon and Lewiston. This bar has been severely eroding for a long time and it is unclear how much bigger it actually might have been in the time of Lewis and Clark. This site and the one at Cougar Rapids Bar were the only ones that seemed to fit the majority of the journal clues.

In 2001, I also made an exploratory trip with John Barker, Sam McNeill, and my daughter Rebecca, along Wapshilla Ridge and down Cottonwood Creek. Our group was able to explore the area with off-road vehicles and went down Cottonwood and over into the Big Cougar Creek drainage. There were several trails in this area but most of them looked like settler trails or cattle trails. I did find some trail segments that headed down the steep ridge system to the mouth of Big Cougar and I believe that this is the trail system followed by Ordway. The route is very practical except for the short, and very steep pitch down to the Snake River. This is the trail segment that Ordway called "the worst hills we ever saw a road made down."

In the summer of 2002, using support from a Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Assistance Grant awarded to John Barker and Sam McNeill, we were able to explore the most difficult segments of the route. We made two one-day trips by 4-wheel-drive vehicle to explore the route at Deer Creek. We also took two helicopter flights to explore the entire route from Big Cougar

Bar to the top of the ridge east of Maloney Creek.

Using the 4-wheel-drive, we were able to access the ridge at the Deer Creek Mine. We hiked down the ridge above the mine and found a very old trail down the ridge as well as the 'newer' trail to the mine. We also drove to the upper Deer Creek access and then hiked north to the old Deer Creek Mill below the mine. The ridge to the mine had a trail up it but it was corrupted by mining activity and a pipeline. On the east side of the creek, I found a trail that looked very much like an old horse trail but found out later that it was part of the drag trail for the mine. We also explored this drag trail from the top of the ridge. The drag trail is shown on Map-4.

The view of the trail system from the helicopter was outstanding. We were able to see the faint traces of old trail mixed with cattle trails, mining trails, homesteading trails, and various water ditches. I recorded the various trail waypoints with a hand-held GPS and then transferred the data to the GIS system I used to make the maps. The helicopter also transported us to places where we could hike down the trail route to the Salmon River. The first hike John and I took was down the west side of Deer Creek from south of the Deer Creek Mine to the mouth of Eagle Creek. We stayed along the sidehills on a trail that had been used for homestead access. I later discovered that the true trail was further down the slope of the hill. For our second hike, we were joined by Eric Barker, outdoors editor for the Lewiston Tribune. The helicopter dropped the three of us off at a lower point on Hoover Ridge where we hiked to the mouth of Deer Creek. On that hike, we could clearly see the old Nez Perce Trail along the sidehill on the west side of Deer Creek. Our main goal in exploring Hoover Ridge was to discover where Ordway had crossed over it on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1806. We were able to find good tread evidence on the west face of the ridge and just above the mouth of Deer Creek. This route was recorded using GPS and has been transferred to the GIS mapping program.

## Overview of the Trip and Route

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, both Lewis and Clark report in their journals (§1) that Sergeant Ordway, and privates Frazer, and Weiser were being sent to over to Lewis's River [Salmon River] to procure an abundance of salmon which the Nez Perce had informed them about. The Nez Perce said that the signal for the returning salmon is the dove cooing, which they had heard on May 27<sup>th</sup> (§2). The salmon fishing party crossed the Clearwater River at Kamiah and headed westward on a well-worn trail up the north side of Lawyer Creek. After crossing Suzie Creek, the trail went up the steep sidehill to the ridge on the west side of the creek and followed the ridge until coming to the Nez Perce Prairie. Here the trail forked, one branch going northward and one branch going westward. The northward branch accessed the Clearwater River area between Orofino and Lewiston. They took the westward branch on a direct route toward the bridge where Highway 95 crosses Lawyer Creek; passing through the open prairie just south of the town of Nez Perce. At the highway bridge, they crossed the creek and went southward into Icicle Flat. Passing just west of Ferdinand, and staying on top of the shallow ridges all the way, they arrived at the Nez Perce village in a large meadow where Lawyer Creek comes out of the narrow canyon. The inhabitants of the Nez Perce village showed them great hospitality and provided them sleeping accommodations in their lodges. This was their camp of May 27<sup>th</sup>.

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, they headed westward on a major Nez Perce trail that passed just south of the old towns of Westlake and Morrow. After two hours of travel, the trail branched. The major branch kept heading westward toward Lake Waha and the other branch headed southward toward

the head of Deer Creek and the Salmon River. The trail they followed crossed the heads of Maloney and Deer Creek and went down the steep, rocky ridge at the Deer Creek Mine. After reaching Deer Creek, the trail then stayed on the west side of the creek, at the midpoint of the sidehill, until reaching the Nez Perce lodges on the extreme lower part of Deer Creek. There is more than one excellent village site in this area where they could have camped the night of May 28<sup>th</sup>. They were again shown great hospitality by their Nez Perce hosts.

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, they continued to the mouth of Deer Creek and then headed down the Salmon River on the north bank. The salmon run had not reached this part of the river so they had to go to the main Snake River to get their fish. They traveled to the mouth of Wapshilla Creek and then went up the main creek and its first main western branch to the top of Wapshilla Ridge. This route is easy to travel by horse and there is now a primitive dirt road along its entire length. Their trail went northward on the main ridge and then turned westward, dropping into Cottonwood Creek. The trail down Cottonwood is easy going and was used by homesteaders to access the agricultural land in that area. After going down the creek about two miles, the trail went westward up to the ridge between Cottonwood and Big Cougar Creeks. It then followed the ridge system down to the mouth of Big Cougar Cr. and then onto Cougar Rapids Bar. Their camp of May 29<sup>th</sup> was on Cougar Rapids Bar.

On May 30<sup>th</sup>, they stayed at their camp on Cougar Rapids Bar and continued purchasing fish.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, they started their journey back to 'Long Camp' at Kamiah. They retraced their route from Cougar Rapids Bar to lower Deer Creek and returned to the Nez Perce village where they had camped the evening of May 28<sup>th</sup>. The village chief told them that there was a nearer and better road (trail) back to Kamiah and sent two boys with them to show them to a village on that road. From Deer Creek, they went up, over, and down the steep sidehills of the lower part of Hoover Ridge. The trail then took them around the sidehills of the Salmon River 'Oxbow' and to the mouth of Maloney Creek. They then went up the long ridge going northeast until reaching the plains at the top and a village in a small meadow. They camped with the Nez Perce at this village the night of May 31<sup>st</sup>.

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, they headed eastward, crossing Lawyer, Deep, and Telcher Creeks. The trail took them through Keuterville, north of St. Gertrude, and eastward through the town of Cottonwood. They continued eastward down the north side of Cottonwood Creek. They crossed to the south side of Cottonwood Cr. at the same point where Reservation Line Road crosses it. The trail then went across the plains south of Cottonwood Cr.; along the same route as the old Stites stage road and down the ridge to the Clearwater River. Here, the party went down the west side of the Clearwater to a Nez Perce village on the west side of the river at Kooskia, Idaho. They camped on the west side of the river across from the current town of Kooskia and just south of the mouth of the Middle Fork.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, they left Kooskia and traveled northward on the west side of the Clearwater River all the way back to Kamiah. Their June 2<sup>nd</sup> camp was with the main party at Long Camp.

## The Journey in Chronological Order

The following paragraphs describe the Ordway trip in chronological order and document my research on the route. Included is my reasoning and decisions on why I think these routes seem to be the most plausible. Refer to the Moulton edition of the journals for more specific information.

### May 27, 1806

The captains send Sergeant Ordway, and privates Frazer, and Weiser over to the Salmon River to procure some salmon with the cooperation of the Nez Perce who lived near the mouth of Deer Creek. Lewis thought it was but a half-days ride and nearly south, but it is southwest and would eventually take them the better part of seven days to get the salmon and return safely.

Kamiah to the Nez Perce Prairie near the town of Nez Perce, Idaho - The trail they followed is the same trail that they used when first entering the Kamiah area on May 13, 1806 (§3). The three men started out from Long Camp at Kamiah which was located on the north side of the Clearwater river where the lumber mill is now located. They swam their horses across the Clearwater River and started up the heavily-used trail along Lawyer Creek (§4). This trail went through the middle of modern-day Kamiah and up the north side of the creek. They continued up the creek for five miles and then climbed northward up the ridge on the west side of Suzie Creek.

At the mouth of Suzie Creek, there is now a tourist lodge called the Flying B Ranch, which occupies the open hillside that the trail crossed. Lawyer Creek at this point was originally scattered across the glades along the creek bottom. Even today, the creek changes course with the spring floods. To this point they have been following the heavily used trail that goes from Kamiah to the lower Clearwater River. At the lower end of this large glade was the party's encampment of May 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> at the village of *Tin-nach-e-moo-toolt*.

After climbing to the top of the ridge, the trail followed along the flat parts of the ridge and in a generally north-northwest direction until a fork in the trail was reached in the southwest corner of Section 2. Here the trail to Lewiston went in a northwest-to-north direction and the trail to the upper end of Lawyer Creek went in a west-southwest direction. This latter trail passed about 1.3 miles south of the city center of Nez Perce, Idaho.

Near Nez Perce, Idaho to the upper end of Lawyer Creek - The trail continued in nearly a straight line across the gently undulating plains until it reached the crossing of Lawyer Creek (§5) near where the modern Highway 95 crosses it in Section 24. There are two and possibly three places where the trail went down to the creek from the prairie. Both are just east of the current highway and its bridge across Lawyer Creek. Highway and bridge construction have obscured the true identity of the trail tread location.

After descending into Lawyer Creek, the trail followed up the creek a short distance to the location of the old rest area on the south side of the creek and then bore south-southwest along a narrow canyon and up to the plain now know as Icicle Flat. The trail kept to a natural route along the high points of the flat and adjoining ridges all the way to a point where Lawyer Creek comes out of its narrow canyon and into a large open meadow. This large meadow was the location of the "Chief's Village" that Ordway talks about (§6) when he says "the Indian's grass houses leak."

Ordway says that they followed up Lawyer Creek about eight miles after striking the creek at Hwy 95. I don't believe that he means that they literally followed the creek bottom but

rather that they followed along the route of the creek. The going along the meandering, brush-choked creek would have been much more difficult than the partially timbered plains. If they had traveled the creek bottom, the actual distance would have significantly exceeded their estimate of eight miles. The distance from Long Camp at Kamiah to the crossing of Lawyer's Creek at Hwy 95 is about 20 topo miles which is in excellent agreement with that statement by Lewis (§7) on June 2<sup>nd</sup> that the first 20 miles of their route was up Lawyer Creek and through a plain open country. The distance from the Hwy 95 crossing to the encampment of May 27 is six miles, 25% shorter than the eight miles reported by Ordway but still well within the tolerance of mileage estimates they have generally given for travel in similar terrain. If we add the 20 miles reported by Lewis with the 6 actual miles after crossing the creek, we arrive at a total distance of 26 miles. Ordway's encampment for May 27 is approximately 1.7 miles east of the old town site of Westlake, Idaho.

### **May 28, 1806**

East of Westlake to the Deer Creek Mine - The next morning, the party of three started out early on a course nearly west, passing less than half a mile to the south of the pioneer town of Westlake, Idaho and crossing the upper reaches of the West Fork of Maloney Creek in Section 22. *Ordway reported that they set out early and rode on a plain for about 2 hours and then left the road and bore south through an unlevel timbered country* (§8) This country is essentially flat and, at that time, was probably easy going with a mature forest canopy and sparse understory brush. This is a good description of the route. I suspect that the "road" they were following was actually headed in the direction of Waha and that, when they turned south, they were following a secondary branch of the trail system (§9). It seems unlikely that much tread can be found along this segment because of all the ranching, logging, and road building that has occurred. I've never found tread in this location. After crossing the head of Maloney Creek, the trail bore south to reach the Nez Perce camps along Deer Creek and the Salmon River at the mouth of Deer Creek.

Deer Creek Mine to the mouth of Deer Creek. - The trail would have stayed to the high points of the shallow ridge system until reaching the top of the ridge at the Deer Creek Mine. *Ordway reports that "towards evening, descended a bad hill down on a creek."* At this point, there are two options for the trail down into Deer Creek. The first is to go directly down the steep, narrow, wooded ridge, near where the mine is located, to the forks of the creek where the old processing plant was located. The other alternative is to go down the open ridge on the east side of the creek. The open ridge route was used as a drag trail for getting equipment to the processing plant. Both of these routes are good candidates for Ordway's route. I examined tread from both and think that the narrow ridge was the correct one because of Ordway's "bad hill" remark. The tread there has been disturbed by much mining traffic.

After going down the rugged ridge to the site of the old processing plant for the Deer Creek Mine, the trail headed south and stayed on the sidehills to the west of Deer Creek. It reached the Nez Perce village along the creek in the lower end of Section 22. This was the Nez Perce band that would assist them in finding a good salmon fishing location. Unfortunately, the salmon run had not yet started on the Salmon River so they would have to continue on to the Snake River the following day.

The route I have plotted for May 28<sup>th</sup> is based on the scant directions given by Ordway in

his journal. He comments that they “rode on a plain about two hours” and then “left the road” and “bore south through an unlevel timbered country until towards evening.” He reports they “descended a bad hill down to a creek.” I believe this creek to be Deer Creek.

His comment “left the road” leads me to believe that they were following the major Nez Perce trail in this area that went from the Cottonwood and Grangeville areas down past Waha and on to Asotin and Lewiston. This route was later used for a stage road. The trail junction was probably in Section 17, just to the west of the East Fork of Maloney Creek. However, they were still traveling a trail that was used to get to the usable camping and salmon fishing areas along the north side of the Salmon River.

It is more than a 2-hour ride from the camp of May 27<sup>th</sup> to the point where the trail went south into Deer Creek. The actual distance is more like 12 miles, which would take at least three hours and maybe four. My interpretation of this is that they departed from the main trail after 2 hours. Their total travel distance was about 20 miles, which made for a shorter day than most. Ordway’s comment about descending the bad hill towards evening probably meant late afternoon which, after a 14-mile ride, may have taken up to five hours. If they started out at 7 or even 8 am, this would put them at the “bad hill” at 12 or 1 pm which would not be called “evening.” Thus, the reported travel time in the journal can’t be reconciled with the actual distances today unless they took a long noonday break, or got a very late start.

### **May 29, 1806**

Mouth of Deer Creek to the top of Wapshilla Ridge - They headed due south down Deer Creek and, in a short distance, they reached the north bank of the Salmon River which they followed down about six miles to the mouth of Wapshilla Creek. They went up Wapshilla Creek in a northwest direction until reaching the top of Wapshilla Ridge in Section 3. Today, there is a primitive road following this same route.

Ordway reported that they shortly arrived at a fork of the Salmon River and then followed down the Salmon for some distance before bearing right up a creek (§10). This description takes the party to the mouth of Deer Creek and then along the north side of the Salmon River to the mouth of Wapshilla Creek. I have examined this route with Sam McNeill and John Barker and found it to be very practical.

Ordway’s comment “bore to the right up a creek” can be interpreted to mean either China Creek or Wapshilla Creek. He does comment that they passed one lodge and crossed a steep bad hill which is a proper description of either the Wapshilla or China Creek routes. However, I rejected China Creek using the following reasoning - the canyon walls are so steep that it is not safe to ride a horse up or down them until you get well in to the head of the China Creek canyon. Riding to near the head of the canyon puts you so far north that you have to ride southwest down one of the long creeks on the west side of Wapshilla Ridge to get to the Snake River. All the creeks on the west side of Wapshilla Ridge head southwest. This is much too circuitous of a route to have been a typical Nez Perce trail.

Wapshilla Ridge to Cougar Rapids Bar - A short distance north on the ridge took them to a trail down Cottonwood Creek in Section 34. This trail forks at the boundary between Sections 4 and 5. The southwest fork was a trail that went to the mouth of Cottonwood Creek and a Nez Perce fishing camp. The west fork of the trail was the one followed by the Ordway party. Sam, John, Rebecca Russell, and I rode ATV’s down this route and found it to be very practical for

travel. It was used extensively in the homesteading days to provide access to Cottonwood Creek but the numerous trails left over from the homesteading days obscure the original Nez Perce Trails.

The west fork of the trail continued over the major ridge between Cottonwood and Big Cougar Creeks and descending down a secondary ridge nearly west to Cougar Rapids Bar. The salmon fishing camp of the Nez Perce they visited was at Cougar Rapids Bar.

I am confident of my determination of the trail route all the way to Cottonwood Creek but I've had to struggle with determining the actual location of the salmon fishing camp. How did I decide on Cougar Rapids Bar? Ordway says they "descended the worst hill we ever saw a road made down" to get to the Snake River. These were men who had been through the very rugged canyon of Hungry Creek on the Lolo Trail so the location must have a steep and very rugged ridge where the trail comes down to the river. There are two of these locations that fit the description and that are possible candidates given the location of the trail determined thus far. The first is the mouth of Cottonwood Creek and the second is Cougar Rapids Bar. I have been able to get a good look at both sites and their adjoining hillside, Cottonwood by river raft visit and Cougar Rapids Bar by helicopter visit.

There are only a select few primary clues in the journals that provide us with any information about the location of this salmon fishing camp. Besides the "worst hill" clue, Ordway says that it was at a "bad rapid" (§11) and that the best fishing was "on the opposite shore along the rocks in the whorls & eddys." I believe these descriptions best fit Cougar Rapids Bar.

### **May 30, 1806**

Cougar Rapids Bar - The party stayed at the fishery today so they could get a sufficient quantity of salmon.

### **May 31, 1806**

Cougar Rapids Bar to Deer Creek - The party retraced their route up Cottonwood Creek, over Wapshilla Ridge, down Wapshilla Creek, and up the north side of the Salmon River back to their camp of May 28<sup>th</sup> on Deer Creek. The chief at this village convinced the party that there was a nearer, better road than the one they had followed up Lawyer Creek so they decided to take his advice.

Deer Creek to Maloney Creek - The trail first took them eastward over the south end of Hoover Ridge, which Ordway called "a very bad hill." This is no exaggeration! After exploring the west face of Hoover Ridge, we certainly agree. The east face is even worse but stockmen have been herding cattle (§12) down those steep ridges on switchbacked trails - so it can be done. Ordway says that they went down to the Salmon River again. I believe they went along the sidehills of the north side of the river to the mouth of Maloney Creek. From our helicopter flight of this area, we saw numerous roads and some trails along the route but cannot identify the exact trail route followed by Ordway because of all the ranching activity that has occurred there since homesteading days.

Maloney Creek to May 31<sup>st</sup> Camp - Ordway reports that "we left the river and ascended a



high long hill (§13) near the top of which is a large village. We camped near this village as night came on.” Our helicopter flight identified both a road and a trail up a long ridge northeast out of the mouth of Maloney Creek. During my Salmon River float trip, I was able to stop and hike up this ridge for some distance to identify a trail and old road up it. I believe this was a major trail (§14) used by the Nez Perce to access the Salmon River from the Lapwai area. I found the likely campsite at the rim of the canyon in a nice meadow where there is a spring feeding a branch of Deep Creek. This meadow is a shallow “divide” that separates branches of Maloney, Deep, and Willow Creeks. There is currently some ranch buildings in the area and a county road runs through the campsite.

### **June 1, 1806**

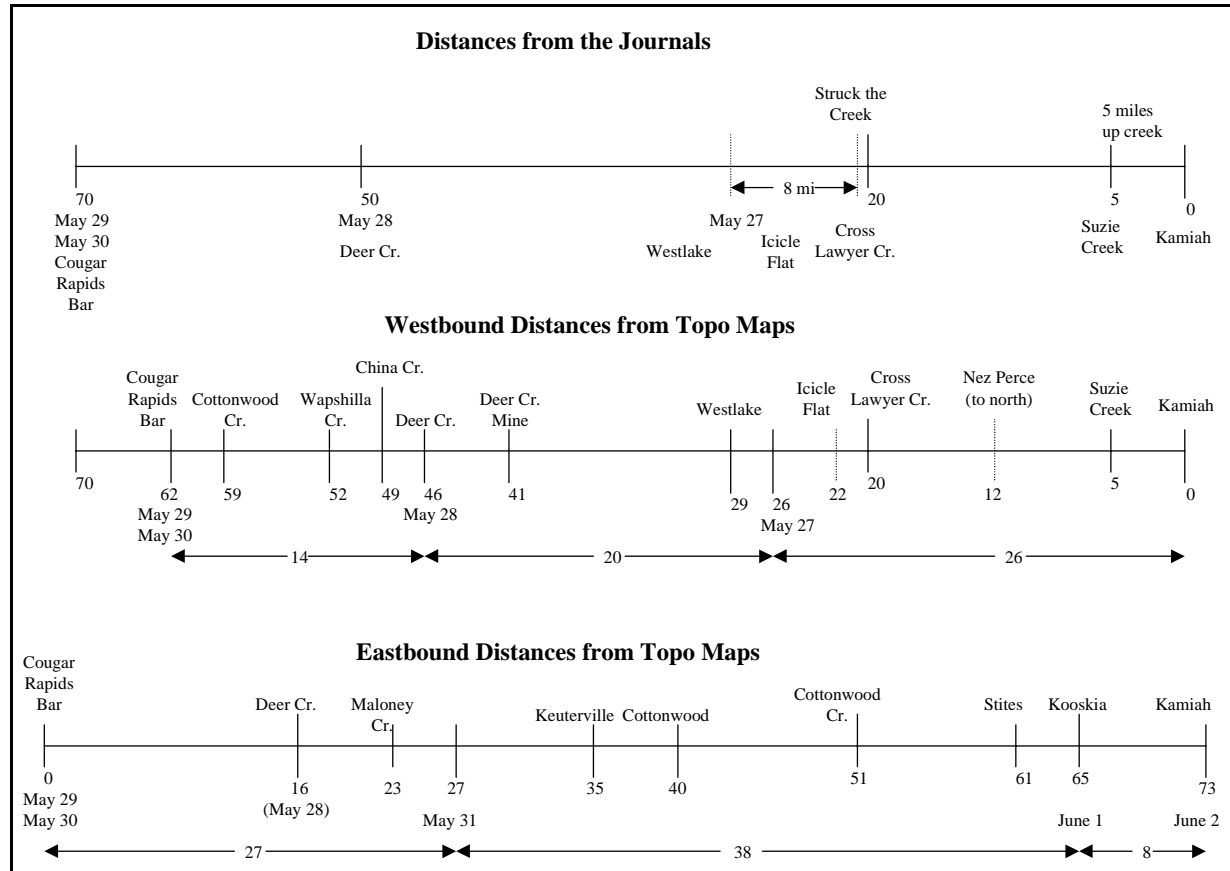
May 31<sup>st</sup> Camp to Cottonwood - For this route, I have traveled all the public roads along the route and studied the old maps, including the 1877 war trail maps, and conclude that Ordway was following the same old Nez Perce trail that had probably been used for hundreds of years. He talks about traveling through a timbered country before striking the head of a creek in a plain. I believe he went pretty much due east from the camp, leaving the old trail that went northward along Willow Creek and going eastward through Sections 35, 34, 2, and 1. The trail crossed a branch of Deep Creek in the northeast corner of Section 12. It then followed along either on the county road or to the north of it and then along Telcher Creek and through a low saddle into Keuterville. The trail went northeast through the next saddle and passed through the prairie land to the north of St. Gertrude Academy and then on to the town of Cottonwood. Cottonwood Creek at the town of Cottonwood is the “head of a creek in the plain.”

Cottonwood to Kooskia - They followed down the north side of Cottonwood Creek, more or less on a straight line, until crossing to the south side where the Nez Perce Reservation boundary road crosses the creek. The “high plain with a good road” is the plateau country on the southeast side of Cottonwood Creek. The route is pretty much the same as the old stage road, including the ridge system where the old road and trail went down to the South Fork of the Clearwater River at the same general location as the Clearwater Battlefield site. I used my knowledge of other old trails in this area to make the location identification. The journals do not mention crossing the river so I kept them on the west side of the river all the way from Stites to Kooskia. According to Ordway’s journal, they traveled to another village near the forks of the Clearwater. They camped for the night on the west side of the river at Kooskia.

### **June 2, 1806**

Kooskia to Kamiah - They went down the west side of the Clearwater and back to Kamiah. Ordway mentions that they passed two more villages and arrived at the river crossing at about noon.

## Distance Data



## Summary of Distances

The figure above shows all of the distance data from the journals and compares this data to modern topographic data.

## Research Summary

I am very pleased with the results of this research. The route is feasible and had good agreement with the limited details given in the journals. The entire route can be traveled by horse with reasonable safety.

The campsites were chosen to agree with the information in the journals and the good 'situations' at the campsites. All the sites can be easily verified by archeology because they will contain significant evidence of Nez Perce habitation.

## End Notes

- §1. Moulton, Volume 7, Pages 291 and 293.
- §2. Moulton, Volume 7, Page 321.
- §3. Lewis describes this route in his journal entry for May 13, Page 252 in Volume 7 of the Moulton edition.
- §4. Ordway reports in his journal entry for May 27<sup>th</sup> that they swam their horses across the Clearwater River and went on to a village on Lawyer Creek. They went up the creek for about 5 miles and then “ascended a high hill on a plain.” This high hill is the ridge west of Suzie Creek. Proceeding on, he says they passed a lodge where they struck the creek again and then followed up the creek about 8 miles further where they came to the chief’s village where they would camp for the night.
- §5. Lewis reports this distance to be about 20 miles on Page 327, Vol. 7 of Moulton. It is approximately 20 topographic miles from Kamiah to the crossing of Lawyer Creek.
- §6. Ordway’s journal, page 315, Vol. 9 of Moulton.
- §7. The report of Ordway’s trip given by Lewis can be found starting on Page 326, Vol. 7 of Moulton.
- §8. Ordway’s journal, page 316, Vol. 9 of Moulton.
- §9. Several miles to the north of here is Cold Springs. I have an old map that shows a trail taking off from Cold Springs and heading in the direction of Westlake. The trail is labeled “Salmon River Trail” and I suspect that it went through this area. This “Salmon River Trail” probably accessed the river at both Deer and Maloney Creeks.
- §10. Ordway’s journal for May 29<sup>th</sup> is page 316, Vol. 9 of Moulton.
- §11. This mention of a “bad rapid” has led modern Lewis and Clark researchers to search for the worst rapids on this section of the river. Blasting of the Snake River rapids and changes in water flow since 1806 make this search very difficult. I read the “river rat” book by ‘river rat’ Elmer Earl (“Hell’s Canyon - A River Trip”) and he said that, in his day, the worst rapids were at the mouth of Cottonwood Creek. Others believe the worst rapids were at Wild Goose Rapids. My location of the fishery is not based upon the worst rapids because I could not find a source of data necessary to make a reasonable decision. It is also interesting that Ordway did not elaborate on the size of this rapid but Lewis, who had not seen the rapid, described it as “a very considerable rapid nearly as great, from the information of Sargent Ordway, as the great falls of the Columbia, the river 200 yards wide.” I wonder if the size of the rapid grew with the telling of it!
- §12. I have interviewed people in the Craigmont and Cottonwood areas who told me that horse trails did exist on these steep ridges. We did not have a chance to hike them in the

summer of 2002.

- §13. This is the long ridge northeastward from the mouth of Maloney Creek to the top where there is now a small meadow alongside the current county road. This campsite has a nice spring and is located just north of the rim of the Salmon River canyon.
- §14. This trail shows up in other documentation I have of old trails on the Nez Perce Prairie. It is also part of the route followed by the Nez Perce in the 1877 war. This latter route is documented in USDA Forest Service archives.

## Appendix-A Interpretive Narrative

On their eastward journey home, the Corps of Discovery reached Kamiah, Idaho on May 13, 1806 and established what is now called “Long Camp” on the north bank of the Clearwater River. The remainder of May and the first ten days of June were spent in rest, recreation, and preparation for an early journey over the snowbound Lolo Trail. An essential part of this preparation was the gathering of food to meet daily needs and food to be eaten on the trail. The Lolo Trail was essentially barren of sufficient food sources for such a large group.

Captains Lewis and Clark were keenly interested in procuring salmon supplies but the salmon run had not yet reached the Clearwater at Kamiah. Their Nez Perce friends informed them that the sign of returning salmon would be when “the dove is cooing.” The cooing dove prompted the captains to send Sargent Ordway, and privates Frazer, and Weiser over to the Salmon River to “procure an abundance of salmon which the Nez Perce had informed them about.” Lewis reported that it was “but a half-days ride and nearly south.” It is unknown how Lewis arrived at this estimate because it was actually 46 miles to the mouth of Deer Creek on the Salmon River and in a direction nearly southwest.

Ordway and party followed the general course of Lawyer Creek for 26 miles on May 27th and camped in a large open meadow on Lawyer Creek about 1.7 miles east of the old town site of Westlake, Idaho. Places close to their route were Kamiah, Suzie Creek, Nez Perce, Highway 95 bridge across Lawyer Creek, Icicle Flat, and Ferdinand. It was rainy that night so their Nez Perce hosts provided them with ‘grass houses’ that leaked.

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, they continued southwestwardly passing south of Westlake, Morrow, and the heads of Maloney and Deer Creeks. They turned southward and went down the west side of Deer Creek to near its mouth where they again were hosted at a Nez Perce village. At this camp, Frazer traded a razor for two Spanish mill dollars, good evidence of the wide distribution of trade among the tribes of the west. It was still rainy, making the trip and sleeping rather miserable. We suspect that it was at this camp that Ordway learned that the salmon have not started their run on the Salmon River.

Their trip of May 29<sup>th</sup> took them to the Snake River at Cougar Rapids Bar. They proceeded to the mouth of Deer Creek and then followed the north bank of the Salmon, past Eagle and China Creeks, to the mouth of Wapshilla Creek and up that creek. The west branch of Wapshilla provided an easy route to the top of Wapshilla Ridge where they went north and then westward down Cottonwood Creek. Ordway said they “crossed a steep, bad hill.” After three miles down Cottonwood, they crossed the ridge to the west and continued westward down a secondary ridge system to the mouth of Cougar Creek and the Nez Perce camps at Cougar Rapids Bar. Ordway called their final descent to the Snake Rivers the “worst hills we ever saw a road made down.” They have now taken three days to travel over 62 miles but they have finally reached the salmon run. The unwelcome news is that the camp has but few salmon. Their greeting at this camp was much more formal than the previous two. They were asked not to go into the lodge until they were invited. Soon, they were invited in and shown great hospitality. This “lodge” or long house was reported to be 100 feet long and 20 feet wide.

Ordway and party remained at the long house camp on May 30<sup>th</sup> still hoping to purchase enough salmon to make the trip worthwhile. Their hosts again fed them and they were allowed to purchase as many salmon as they thought necessary. Ordway reported that the location of this camp was at a bad rapid where the Nez Perce caught most of their salmon in the whorls and eddies on the west side of the river.

The morning of May 30<sup>th</sup>, they headed back to Kamiah. Ordway reported that some of their salmon were stolen during the night. He did not make an issue of it and he did not mention obtaining additional salmon to replace them. They returned eastward to the village on Deer Creek by the same trail they had taken westward. Upon arriving, the chief told them of a “nearer & better road” that they could take back to Kamiah. With two boys as guides, they continued eastward over Hoover Ridge and around the sidehills north of the Salmon River oxbow to the mouth of Maloney Creek. Today, it is hard to believe that this is a “nearer & better road” but Ordway made no mention of it except to say Hoover Ridge was “a very bad hill.” They proceeded up the ridge to the northeast of Maloney and camped just beyond the top at a large village.

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, they set out early with a “young man” as their guide to a “near way & good road.” This time they traveled nearly due east to the South Fork of the Clearwater River, passing Keuterville, St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, and Cottonwood Creek. This part of the route is indeed a good road and they traveled more than 38 miles! After reaching the Clearwater River across from the battle site, they stopped at a large village to procure “uppah” and “couse.” They then traveled northward along the west bank of the river, passing west of Stites, and camped at Kooskia. At both villages, the party received fine Nez Perce hospitality.

Their final day of travel, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, was uneventful. They traveled up the west side of the river and back to Kamiah where they learned that the captains have been very anxious for their return. The salmon they brought back were excellent, fat specimens except many of them were spoiled from the long journey.

## Appendix-B Geographically Ordered Clues

My method for correlating journal entries with “on-the-ground” explorations is to make a list of geographically ordered clues and then follow them during my field research. The following is the list I made for researching the Ordway route. The journal authors are identified with the following abbreviations:

© => Clark                      (G) => Gass  
(J) => Journal entry              (L) => Lewis              (O) => Ordway

### **May 27, 1806**

(O) Swam their horses across the Clearwater River

© He set out at 8 A. M.

(J) The dove is cooing which is the signal, as the Indians inform us, of the approach of the Salmon

(O) Went to the village on Lawyer Creek

(O) Went up Lawyer Creek 5 miles

(O) Left Lawyer Creek and ascended a high hill on a plain

(O) Proceeded on

(O) Passed a lodge where we struck the creek again

(O) Followed up Lawyer creek 8 miles further

(O) Came to the chiefs village

(L, p 327) The first 20 miles of their route was up Lawyer Creek and through a plain open country, the hills of the creek continued high and broken with some timber near its borders. The balance of their route was through a high broken mountainous country generally well timbered.

### **May 28, 1806**

(O) Set out early

(O) Rode on a plain about 2 hours

(O) Left the road and bore south through an unlevel timbered country

(O) Towards evening, descended a bad hill down on a creek

(O) Followed the creek some distance

(O) Arrived at a village where we camped

### **May 29, 1806**

(O) We proceeded on

(O) Shortly arrived at a fork of the Salmon River

(O) Followed down the Salmon River some distance

(O) Left the Salmon River and bore to the right up a creek

(O) Passed one lodge

(O) Crossed a steep bad hill

(O) Descended down a long hill and a run

(O) Pass a large lodge

(O) Descended the worst hills we ever saw a road made down.

(O) Arrived at a fishery at a bad rapid

(C, p 329) These men set out on the 27<sup>th</sup> ulto. And instead of finding the fishing shore at the

distance of a half a days ride as we had been informed, they did not reach the place at which they obtained their fish until the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup> having traveled nearly 70 miles.

(L, p 327) ...they did not reach the place at which they obtained their fish until the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup> having traveled by their estimate nearly 70 miles. The route they had taken however was not a direct one.

(L, p 327) The Indians conducted them in the first instance to the Salmon River about 20 miles above its junction with the Snake River, a distance of about 50 miles...

(C, p329) The Indians conducted them in the first instance to the Salmon River about 10 miles above it's junction with the Snake River, a distance of about 50 miles...

(L, p 327) They were conducted down that river to a fishery a few miles below the junction of the forks of Lewis's River about 20 miles further.

(L, 327) At the fishery on the Snake River below the forks, there is a very considerable rapid nearly as great from the information of Sargent Ordway as the great falls of the Columbia, the river 200 yards wide.

(L, p 327) The general course from hence to the forks of the Snake River is a little to the west of south about 45 miles.

### **May 30, 1806**

(O) The most Salmon they catch is on the opposite shore along the rocks in the whorls & eddys [they stayed in camp today]

### **May 31, 1806**

(O) Got up our horses early and set out on our return

(O) Followed back the same road we went on to the fork of the Salmon River

(O) We followed up to the village we left the day before yesterday

(O) Their chief directed us another way which he said was a nearer & better road

(O) Sent 2 boys to show us the way to a village on the road

(O) They took us over a very bad hill down on to the Salmon River again

(O) Left the river and ascended a high long hill near the top of which is a large village

(O) We camped near said village as night came on.

[They went 27 miles over what we consider today as very bad going. The trail must have been pretty well located and decent going in order to make this many miles.]

### **June 1, 1806**

(O) We set out early

(O) A young man went and put us on the road which he said was a near way & a good road

(O) We rode through the timbered country

(O) Struck the head of a creek in the plain

(O) Followed down said creek

(O) Passed one lodge

(O) About noon, the road left the creek and kept through a high plain. A good road

(O) Towards evening we came down the river hills to a large village above the forks of the river.

(O) Proceeded on to another village down the river near the forks

(O) Night came on and we camped here at the chiefs lodge

(L) We begin to feel some anxiety with respect to Sargent Ordway and party who were sent to the Salmon River for Salmon; we have received no intelligence of them since they set out. We



desired Drewyer (or Drouillard) to make some enquiry after the Twisted Hair...

**June 2, 1806**

(O) We set out early

(O) Turned down the river and passed 2 more villages

(O) About 12 O'clock, we arrived at our camp.

(L) About noon, Sargent Ordway, Frazier, and Weiser returned with 17 Salmon and some roots of cows; the distance was so great from which they had brought the fish that most of them were nearly spoiled.

## Appendix-C Journal Transcription with Footnotes

The following are edited journal entries that are quoted, paraphrased, or patterned after the same editing that was done to the original Gass journals. Footnotes have been added to make various research comments.

### ORDWAY

*[Ordway] Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 1806. {Vol. 9, P 315}*

Myself, J. Frazer, and Wiser set out to go over to the Kimooenim River <sup>1</sup> for fish & [?] <sup>2</sup>. Swam our horses and went on to the village <sup>3</sup> on Commeap Creek <sup>4</sup>. Three young men went on with us up this creek about 5 miles. Left this creek and ascended a high hill onto a plain. We proceeded on and passed a lodge where we struck Commeap Creek again. We followed up the creek about 8 miles farther and came to the chiefs' village <sup>5</sup> which took care of our horses. The [?] Chief, and as the (sic) old man said, he was a going on with us in the morning. The young men returned and we camped here. We had a hard thunder shower. The Indian's grass houses leak.

*[Ordway] Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup> 1806. {Vol. 9, P 316}*

We set out early. The old Chief and an other Indian went with us. We rode on a plain about 2 hours and then left the road <sup>6</sup> and bore south through an unlevel timbered country until, towards evening. We saw big horn animals or mountain sheep and saw 14 deer. In this timbered country, [saw] some spots of Snow & fallen timber. We had a hard thunder shower. Towards evening, we descended a bad hill <sup>7</sup> down on a creek and followed it down some distance where we arrived at a village where we camped <sup>8</sup>.

*[Ordway] Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup> 1806. {Vol. 9, P 316}*

It rained the greater part of last night [and it was] a rainy morning. We took a light breakfast. Frazer got 2 Spanish mill dollars from a squaw for an old razor. We expect they got them from the Snake Indians who live near the Spanish country to the South. We proceed on and shortly arrived at a fork <sup>9</sup> of the Kimooenim or Lewises River. We followed down Lewis' River some distance and then left it and bore to the right up a

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1. This is the Snake River which was called Lewis' River by the Corps.

2. Probably "roots."

3. This could be the village of *Tin-nach-e-moo-toolt*.

4. Lawyer Creek at Kamiah.

5. This was a village located in the large meadow, east of Westlake, where Lawyer Creek comes out of the canyon.

6. The road they were traveling was the main road westward to Waha and the Snake River above Lewiston.

7. This is the steep, rocky ridge at the Deer Creek Mine. The creek is Deer Cr.

8. They camped above the mouth of Deer Creek where the canyon widens out into a nice meadow for locating a Nez Perce village.

9. The Salmon River, which the Corps called the East Fork of Lewis' River.

creek <sup>10</sup>. We passed one lodge <sup>11</sup>, crossed a steep bad hill <sup>12</sup>, and descended down a long hill, and a run <sup>13</sup> and passed a large lodge <sup>14</sup>. We then descended the worst hills we ever saw a road made down <sup>15</sup>. Towards evening, we arrived at the Kimooenim or Lewises River at a fishery <sup>16</sup> at a bad rapid <sup>17</sup>. Our chief told us to set down and not go in the lodge until we were invited - so we did. At length, they invited us in, spread robes for us to sit on, and set a roasted Salmon before us, and some of their white bread which they call uppah. We ate heartily of this fat fish but did not eat  $\frac{1}{4}$  of it. It was set up for us. This lodge is about 100 feet long and 20 [feet] wide and all in one <sup>18</sup>. They have but few Salmon.

*[Ordway] Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1806. {Vol. 9, P 317}*

A number of [Indians] left early this morning with nearly all the Salmon which was caught so we had to wait here today, expecting to get some Salmon. The natives roasted another Salmon & set it before us to eat. In the afternoon, we purchased as many Salmon as we thought was necessary to take home and hung them up. They catch the most Salmon on the opposite shore along the rocks in the whorls & eddys. We saw only three dip nets at 3 places [where they were] fishing.

*[Ordway] Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup> 1806. {Vol. 9, P 317}*

Some of the young Indians stole some of our fish and went away in the night. We got our horses up early and set out on our return. Our old chief and his man stayed as they had got no fish yet. We followed back the same road we went on to the [East] Fork of the Kimooenim, which the Indian name of it is Toomonamah River <sup>19</sup>. It is about 150 yards wide. We followed [the creek] up to the same village <sup>20</sup> we had left the day before

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10. They went up Wapshilla Creek.

11. This lodge was probably located where there is now an old ranch, just above the mouth of the creek and well above high water.

12. Wapshilla Ridge.

13. This long hill and a run is Cottonwood Creek.

14. There are excellent places on Cottonwood Cr. for locating a lodge. In the homesteading days, there were homesteads along the creek.

15. This is the very steep and rugged ridge system between Cottonwood and Big Cougar Creeks.

16. Cougar Rapids Bar was the location of the lodges adjacent to the fishery.

17. See end note about this issue.

18. During our helicopter flight over the bar in 2002, we could clearly see the lodge pits on the bar. Lodges were often dug down into the soil to give additional protection against cold weather.

19. This is Ordway's version of the Nez Perce name for the Salmon River.

20. This is the village above the mouth of Deer Creek where they camped the evening of May 28<sup>th</sup>.

yesterday. Their chief directed us another way which he said was nearer & a better road <sup>21</sup>. He sent 2 boys to show us the way to a village on the road. They took us over a very bad hill <sup>22</sup> and down on to the Thommonama river again <sup>23</sup>. Then, we left the river and ascended a high long hill <sup>24</sup> near the top of which is a large village. We camped near this village as night came on.

[Ordway] Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1806. {Vol. 9, P 318}

We set out early and a young man went [with us] and put us on the road which he said was a near way & a good road. We rode through the timbered country <sup>25</sup>, struck the head of a creek <sup>26</sup> in the plain, and followed down this creek. We passed one lodge about noon. The road left the creek and kept through the high plain <sup>27</sup> - a good road. Towards evening, we came down the river hills to a large village <sup>28</sup> above the forks of the Kooskooskee River. We halted a short time to let our horses feed a little and to get something to eat ourselves. We bought a considerable [amount of] uppah <sup>29</sup> and couse <sup>30</sup> from the natives and proceeded on to another village down the river near the forks. Night came on and we camped here at the Chief's lodge <sup>31</sup>. [The Chief] gave us so many horses. They appeared very friendly to us and gave us a large cake of uppah. There is a vast site of excellent horses scattered along this river which they offer to sell for a Squaw axe [per horse] & 2 or 3 [horses] for a gun & a little ammunition.

[Ordway] Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1806. {Vol. 9, P 318}

[It is] a fair morning. We set out early and turned down the river. We passed two more

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21. The Chief probably meant that the road was better once you reached Maloney Creek. It certainly was not better between Deer and Maloney Creek. On that route, they passed over the steep sidehills of Hoover Ridge.

22. This is the end of Hoover Ridge where it gets very steep as it tails off into the Snake River canyon.

23. This is at the mouth of Maloney Creek.

24. This is the long ridge northeastward from the mouth of Maloney Creek to the top where there is now a small meadow alongside the current county road. This campsite has a nice spring and located just north of the rim of the Salmon River canyon.

25. This is the country accessed by the North Road, the Haas Ranch Road, the Morrowtown Road, the Uptmore-Gehrina Road, and the Keuterville Road. The trail passes through Keuterville and north of St. Gertrude.

26. Cottonwood creek at the town of Cottonwood, Idaho.

27. The high plains southwest of Stites, on the west side of the South Fork of the Clearwater.

28. This village was on the large flat on the west side of the river, directly west of the Clearwater Battle Site.

29. Volume 9 of Moulton's edition calls this couse also - but I'm not sure. I don't know what this is.

30. This was probably Cous Biscuitroot (*Lomatium cous* (S. Wats.) Coult. & Rose).

31. This camp was on the west side of the South Fork west of Kooskia and probably on the flat where the railroad siding is located.

villages<sup>32</sup>. About 12 O’Clock we arrived at our camp<sup>33</sup>. [We] found the river very high indeed. Swam the horses across and got across in an Indian canoe as our men informed us that as some of our men were crossing several days past, and our large canoe ran against some trees as they were going to shore, and the canoe upset and sank immediately. ...

### LEWIS

[Lewis] Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 1806. {Vol. 7, P 291}

... We also sent Sergeant Ordway and two men this morning over to Lewis’s River for Salmon, which the Indians inform us may be procured in abundance at the place, and that it is a but a half a days ride, nearly south. ...

[Lewis] Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1806. {Vol. 7, P 323}

... We have begun to feel some anxiety<sup>34</sup> with respect to Sergeant Ordway and party who were sent to Lewis’ River for Salmon. We have received no intelligence of them since they set out. We want Drewyer to make some inquiries of the Twisted Hair ...

[Lewis] Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1806. {Vol. 7, P 326-327}

... About noon, Sargent Ordway, Frazer, and Wiser returned with 17 Salmon and some roots of cows. The distance from which they had brought the fish was so great that most of the fish were nearly spoiled<sup>35</sup>. The fish were as fat as any I ever have seen. We could cook them without the addition of grease. The Salmon that were sound were extremely delicious; their flesh is of a fine rose color with a small admixture of yellow. These men set out on the 27th [of May] and, instead of finding the fishing shore at the distance of half a days ride, as we had been informed, they did not reach the place at which they obtained their fish until the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup>, having traveled, by their estimate, near 70 miles<sup>36</sup>. The route they had taken, however, was not a direct one. The Indians conducted them in the first instance to the east branch of Lewis’s River about 20 miles<sup>37</sup> above it’s junction with the south branch; a distance of about 50 miles<sup>38</sup>; where they [were] informed they might obtain fish; but on their arrival at that place, finding that the Salmon had not yet arrived, or were not taken; they were conducted down that river to a fishery a few miles below the junction of the forks of Lewis’s river about 20 miles further<sup>39</sup>. Here,

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32. Villages located along the river between Kooskia and Kamiah. Ordway does not say which side of the river.

33. Long Camp at Kamiah.

34. Ordway was only supposed to be gone a day or two.

35. I’ve often wondered why the fish were not cooked before leaving the fishery at Cougar Rapids Bar. If not, I don’t know why not. I think they would have been in much better shape upon arriving at Kamiah.

36. I don’t know if this is airline miles or trail miles. The distance by airline is approximately 46 miles. The distance by trail is approximately 62 miles. The trail miles are in pretty good agreement with Ordway’s estimate as reported by Lewis.

37. The mouth of Deer Creek is about 14 miles above the junction of the Snake and Salmon Rivers. Clark reports this distance to be 10 miles as compared to the 20 miles reported by Lewis.

38. This is 45-47 trail miles, a good agreement.

39. This distance is about 16 trail miles.

with some difficulty and remaining one day, they purchased the Salmon which they brought with them. The first 20 miles of their route was up Commeâp Creek and through a plain open country. The hills of the creek continued high and broken with some timber near it's borders. The balance of their route was though a high broken mountainous country, generally well timbered, with pine; the soil fertile in this quarter. They met with an abundance of deer and some bighorned animals. The East Fork of Lewis's river, they describe as one [continuous] rapid about 150 yards wide. It's banks are, in most places, solid and perpendicular rocks, which rise to a great height. It's hills are mountains. High on the tops of some of those hills, over which they passed, the snow had not entirely disappeared, and the grass was just springing up. At the fishery on Lewis's River, below the forks, there is a very considerable rapid nearly as great, from the information of Sargent Ordway, as the great falls of the Columbia the river 200 yards wide <sup>40</sup>. Their common house at this fishery is built of split timber 150 feet long and 35 feet wide - flat at [the] top. The general course from hence to the forks of Lewis's river is a little to the west of south; about 45 miles <sup>41</sup>. — The men at this season resort [to] their fisheries while the women are employed in collecting roots. Both forks of Lewis's River, above their junction, appear to enter a high mountainous country.

### CLARK

[Clark] Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 1806. {Vol. 7, P 293}

Ordway and two men are ordered to cross this river and proceed on through the plains to Lewis's [River] and procure some Salmon on that river, and return tomorrow - if possible. He set out at 8 A. M.

[Clark] Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1806. {Vol. 7, P 325}

We begin to feel some anxiety with respect to Sargent Ordway and party who were sent to Lewis's River for Salmon. We have received no intelligence of them since we sent them out. We desire that Drewyer make some enquiry with the Twisted Hair.

[Clark] Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1806. {Vol. 7, P 329}

About noon Sargent Ordway, Frazier and Wiser returned with Salmon and some roots of the cows; the distance was so great from whence they brought the fish, that most of them were nearly spoiled. These fish were as fat as any I have ever seen; sufficiently so that they cook themselves without the addition of grease or butter. Those which were sound (not spoiled) were extremely delicious; their flesh is of a fine rose color with a small admixture of yellow. These men set out on the 27th of May and, instead of finding the fishing shore at the distance of half a days ride as we had been informed, they did not reach the place at which they obtained their fish until the evening of the 29th - having traveled near 70 miles. The route they had taken however, was not a direct one. The Indians conducted them, in the first instance, to the East Fork of Lewis's River about 10

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40. See end notes for comments.

41. This is in excellent agreement with the airline distance I calculated but it is also in good agreement with many of the candidate gravel bars along the Snake River.

miles <sup>42</sup> above it's junction with the South branch - a distance of about 50 <sup>43</sup> miles where they informed them they might obtain fish. But on their arrival at that place, finding that the Salmon had not arrived or were not taken, they were conducted down that river to a fishery a few miles below the junction of the forks of Lewis's River - about 20 miles <sup>44</sup> further. They remained there one day <sup>45</sup> and, with some difficulty, they purchased the Salmon which they brought with them. The first 20 miles of their route was up Commeâp <sup>46</sup> Creek and through a plain open Country, the hills of the creek continued high and broken with some timber near it's borders. The balance of their route was through a high broken mountainous country, generally well timbered with pine the soil fertile. In this quarter, they meet with an abundance of deer and some big-horned animals <sup>47</sup>. The East fork of Lewis's River they describe as one continuous rapid of about 150 yards wide. It's banks are, in most places, solid and perpendicular rocks which rise to a great height. It's hills are mountainous high. On the top of some of those hills over which they passed, the snow had not entirely disappeared, and the grass was just springing up. At the fishery on Lewis's River below the forks, there is a very considerable rapid, nearly as great, from the information of Sargent Ordway, as the Great Falls of the Columbia <sup>48</sup>. The river is 200 yards wide. The [Nez Perce] common house at this fishery is built of split timber 150 feet long and 35 feet in width and is flat at top <sup>49</sup>. The general course from here <sup>50</sup> to the forks of Lewis's river is a little to the west of South about 45 miles. The men at this season resort [to] their fisheries while the women are employed in collecting roots. Both forks above the junction of Lewis's River appear to enter a high mountainous country.

### GASS

[Gass] Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1806. {Vol. 10, P 235}

About noon three men, who had gone over to Lewis's river, about two and half days' journey distant, to get some fish, returned with a few very good salmon, and some roots which they bought at the different villages of the natives, which they passed. One of these men got two Spanish dollars from an Indian for an old razor.— They said they got the dollars from about a Snake Indian's neck, they had killed some time ago. There are several dollars among these people which they get in some way. We suppose the Snake

---

42. Clark says 10 miles and Lewis says 20 miles. It is actually about 14 miles.

43. This is 45-47 trail miles, a good agreement.

44. This distance is about 16 trail miles.

45. Two nights and one full day.

46. Lawyer Creek.

47. Big-Horn Sheep.

48. See end notes for comments.

49. A pretty good description of a Nez Perce "Long House."

50. Clark is referring to Kamiah as "here."

Indians, some of whom do not live very far from New Mexico, got them from the Spaniards in that quarter. The Snake Indians also get horses from the Spaniards.— The men had a very disagreeable trip as the roads were mountainous and slippery. They saw a number of deer, and of the ibex or big-horn <sup>51</sup> [sheep].

### JOURNAL

*[Journal] Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 1806. {Vol. 7, P 321}*

The dove is cooing which, as the Indians inform us, is the signal of the approach of the Salmon <sup>52</sup>. ...

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51. The Ibex is an Old World name for a similar animal. This is the Bighorn (*Ovis canadensis*) or what is commonly called a Bighorn Sheep.

52. This is the signal that the Corps and Nez Perce have been waiting on. They sent Ordway and party to get Salmon this very day.



## Appendix-D Distribution List

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2124 Grelle Ave  
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Outdoor and Environmental Reporter  
Lewiston Morning Tribune  
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Vera Sonneck  
Cultural Resources  
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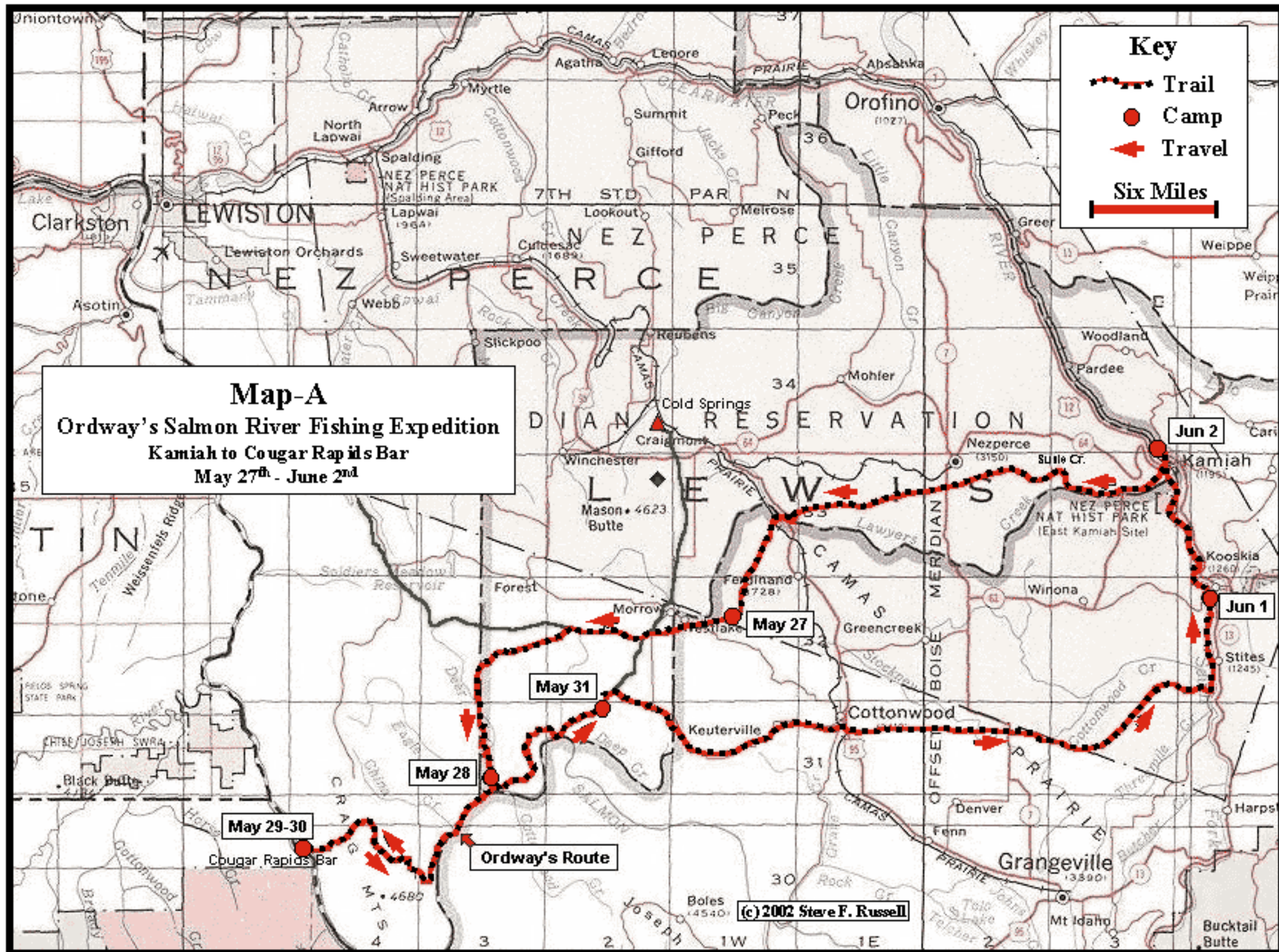
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# MAPS

Map-A	Large scale map of the entire route from Kamiah to Cougar Rapids Bar. Route of May 27 <sup>th</sup> to June 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 1806.
Map-01	The route north of Lawyer Creek from Kamiah to Nez Perce. Includes: Kamiah, Suzie Creek, Nez Perce. Route of May 27 <sup>th</sup> , 1806.
Map-02	The route north of Lawyer Creek from Nez Perce to Icicle Flat northwest of Ferdinand. Includes: Nez Perce, Highway 95 crossing Lawyer Creek, Icicle Flat. Route of May 27 <sup>th</sup> , 1806.
Map-03	The route from Icicle Flat to Maloney Creek. Includes: Icicle Flat, Lawyer Creek, Westlake, Morrow, Willow Creek, Maloney Creek. Route of May 27 <sup>th</sup> & May 28 <sup>th</sup> , 1806.
Map-04	The route from the head of Maloney Creek to the south end of Deer Creek. Includes: Maloney Creek, Morrowtown Road, Hoover Point Road, Deer Creek Mine, Deer Creek. Routes of May 28 <sup>th</sup> & May 31 <sup>st</sup> , 1806.
Map-05	The route from Deer Creek to Wapshilla Creek and eastward over Hoover Ridge. Includes: Deer Creek, Hoover Ridge, Salmon River, Eagle Creek, China Creek, Wapshilla Creek. Routes of May 28 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> , and 31 <sup>st</sup> , 1806.
Map-06	The route from Wapshilla Creek to Cougar Rapids Bar. Includes: Wapshilla Creek, Wapshilla Ridge, Cottonwood Creek, Big Cougar Creek, Cougar Rapids Bar, Cochran Rapids, Cougar Rapids. Routes of May 29 <sup>th</sup> to May 31 <sup>st</sup> .
Map-07	The route from Maloney Creek to Keuterville. Includes: Maloney Creek, Willow Creek, Lawyer Creek, Deep Creek, Telcher Creek, Keuterville. Route of May 31 <sup>st</sup> and June 1 <sup>st</sup> .
Map-08	The route from Keuterville to Cottonwood. Includes: Keuterville, Grave Creek, Shebang Creek, St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, Highway 95, Cottonwood Creek. Route of June 1 <sup>st</sup> .
Map-09	The route along the north side of Cottonwood Creek. Includes: Cottonwood, Cottonwood Creek, Center Road, Highway 7, Reservation Line Road. Route of June 1 <sup>st</sup> .
Map-10	The route from Cottonwood Creek to Clearwater River. Includes: Cottonwood Creek, Old Stites Stage Road, Clearwater River. Route of June 1 <sup>st</sup> .
Map-11	The route along the Clearwater River from Dizzy Head to Kooskia. Includes: Old Stites Stage Road, South Fork Clearwater River, Dizzy Head, Clearwater Battlefield Site, Stites, Kooskia, Middle Fork Clearwater River. Route of June 1 <sup>st</sup> .
Map-12	The route along the Clearwater River from Kooskia to Kamiah. Includes Kooskia, North River Road, East Kamiah, Kamiah, Long Camp. Route of June 2 <sup>nd</sup> .

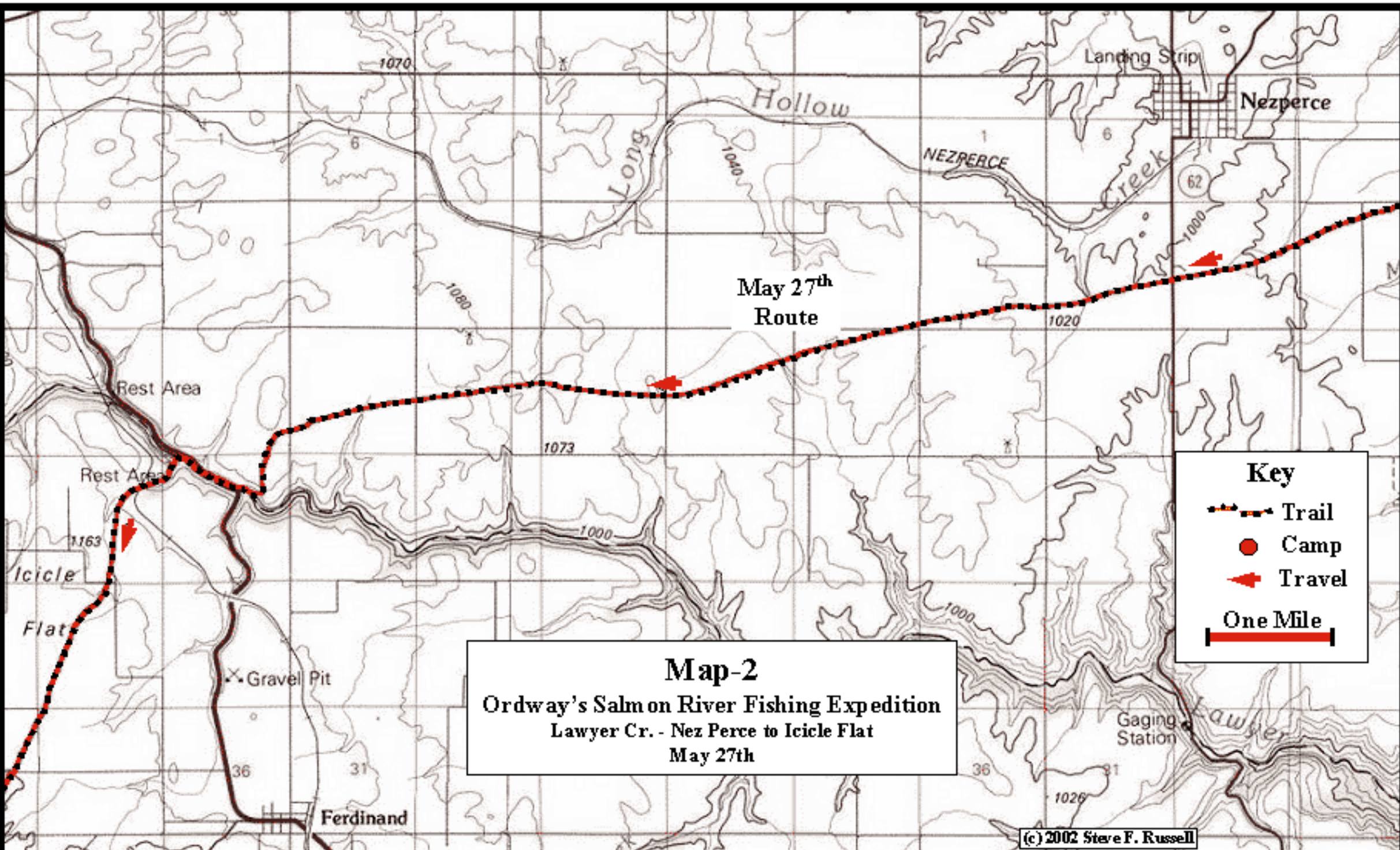




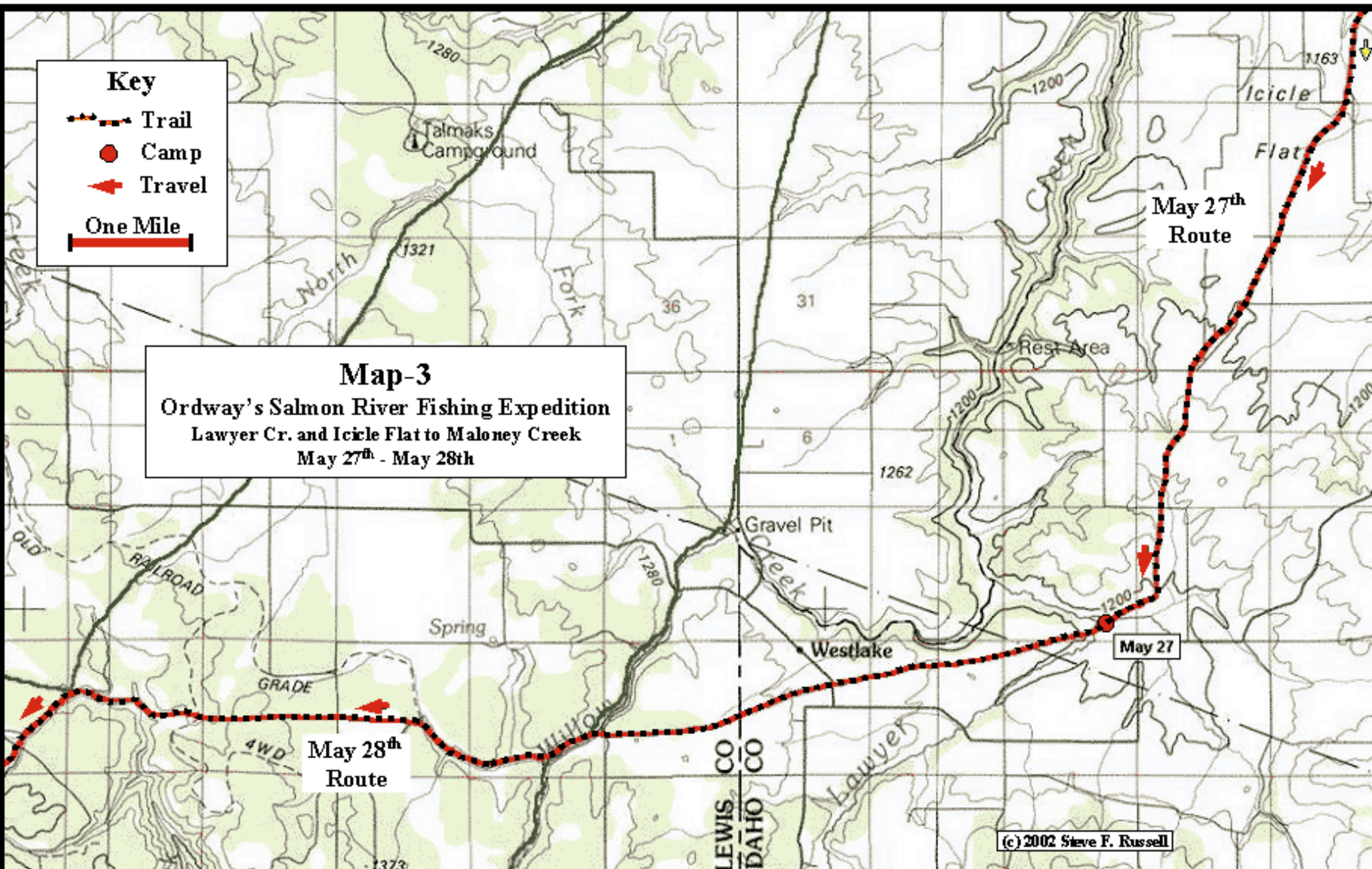




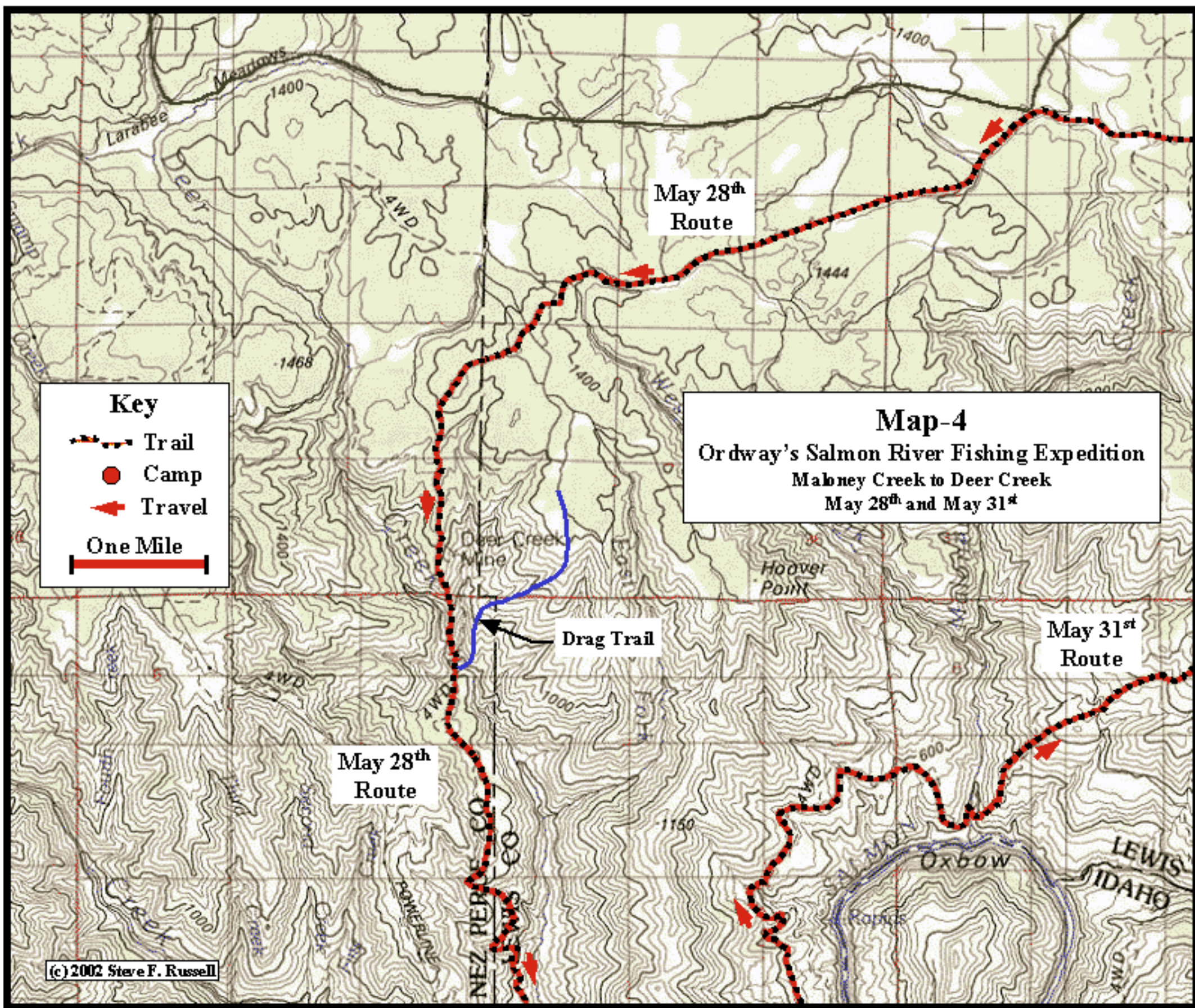




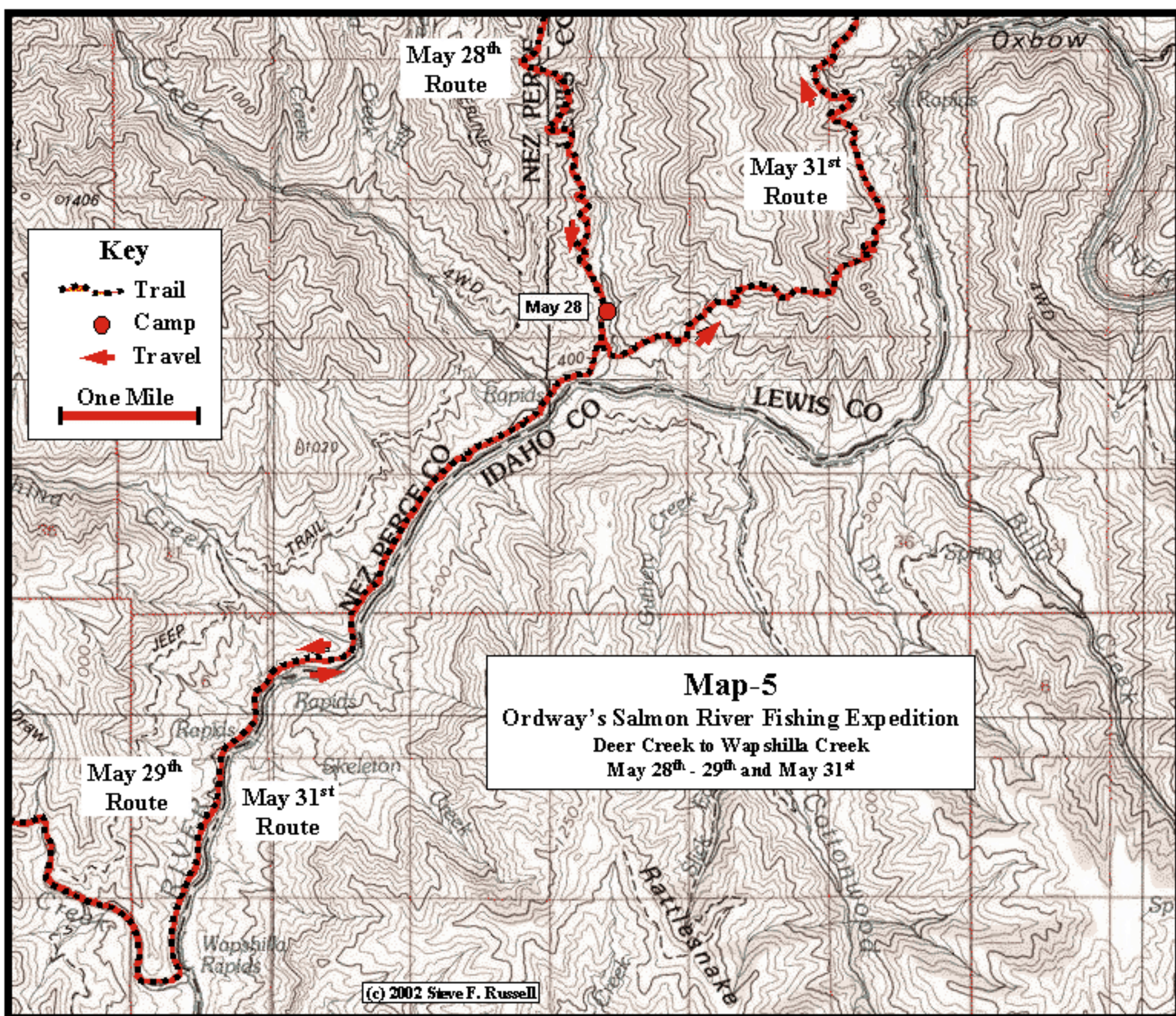




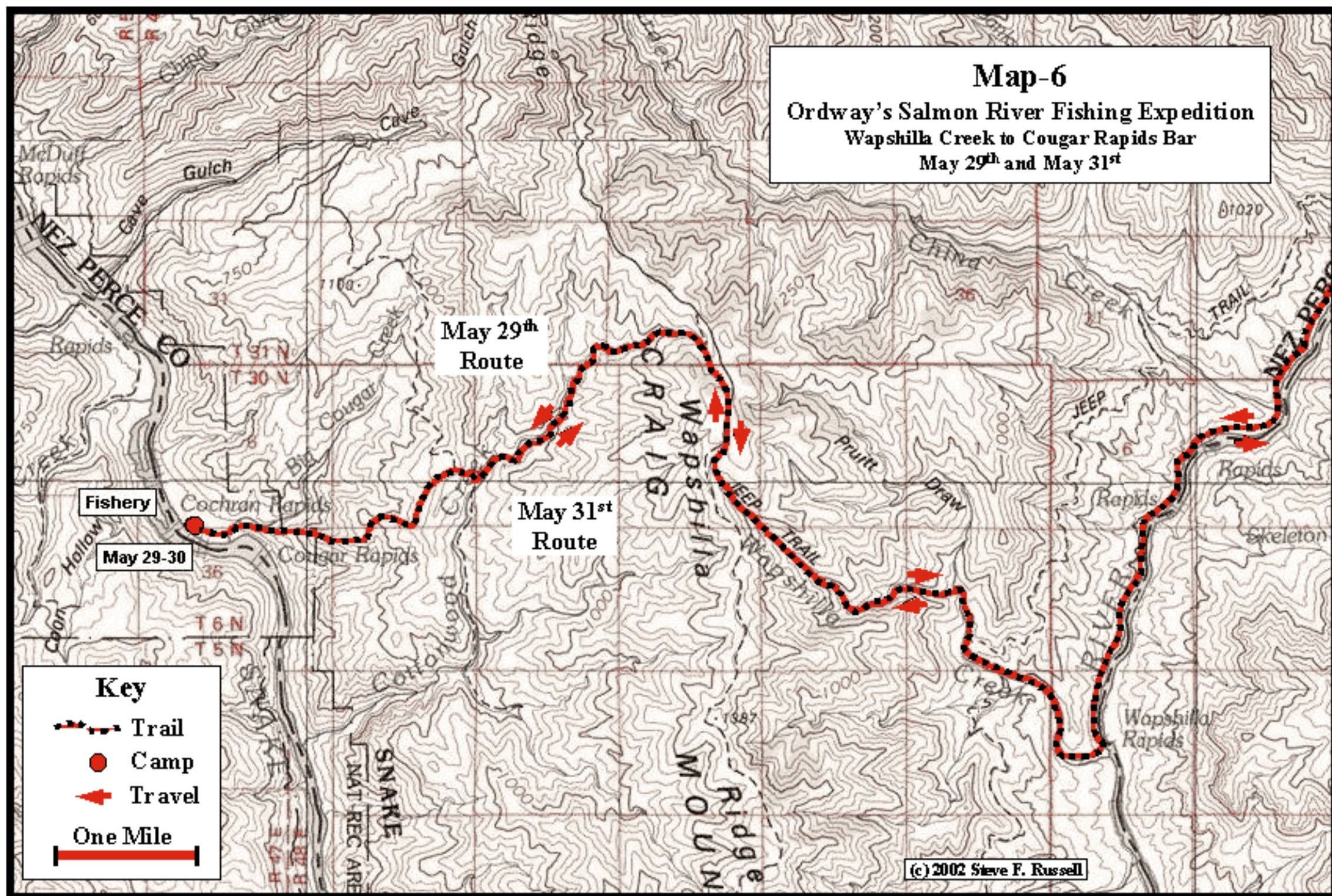










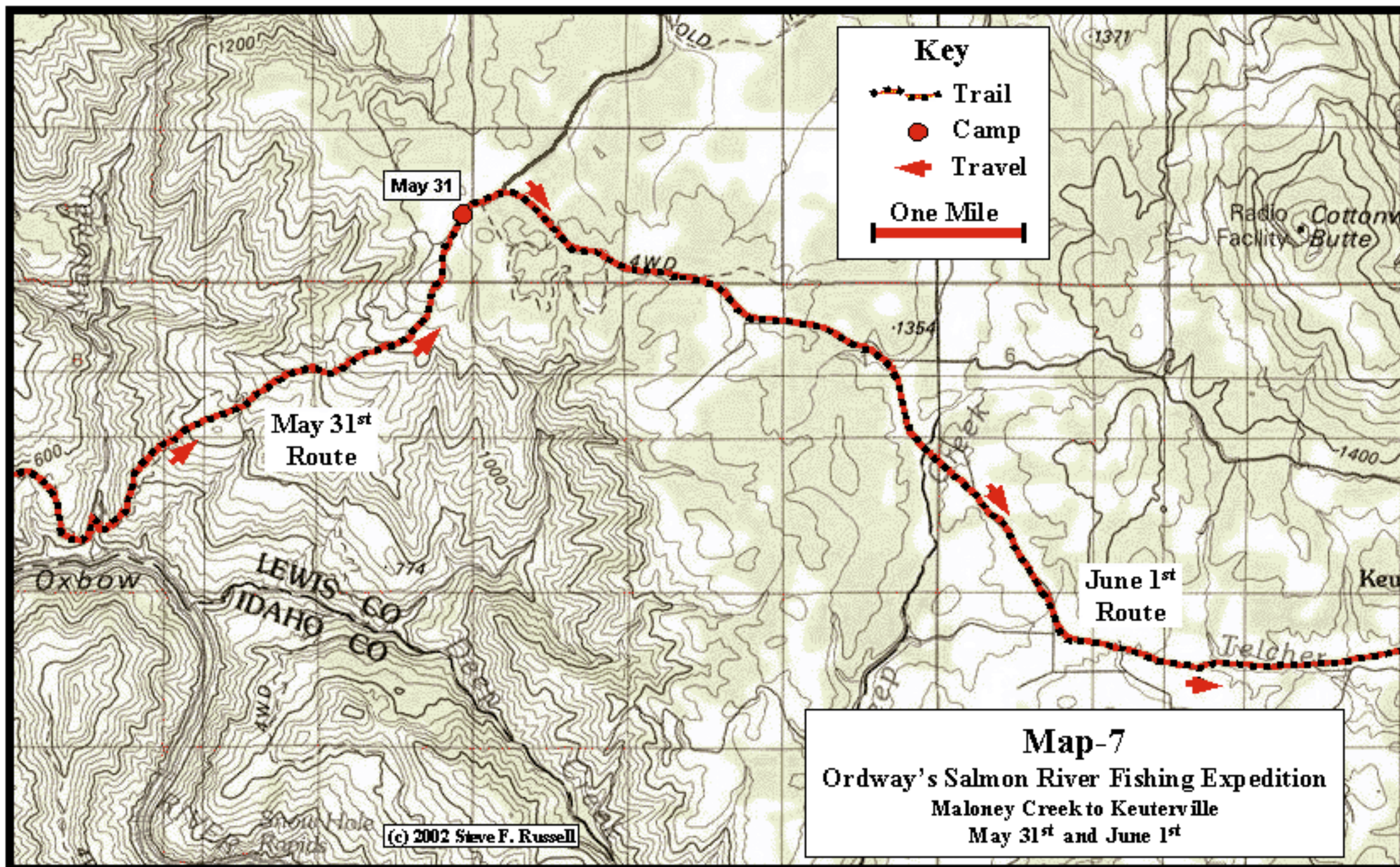


**Map-6**  
Ordway's Salmon River Fishing Expedition  
Wapshilla Creek to Cougar Rapids Bar  
May 29<sup>th</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup>

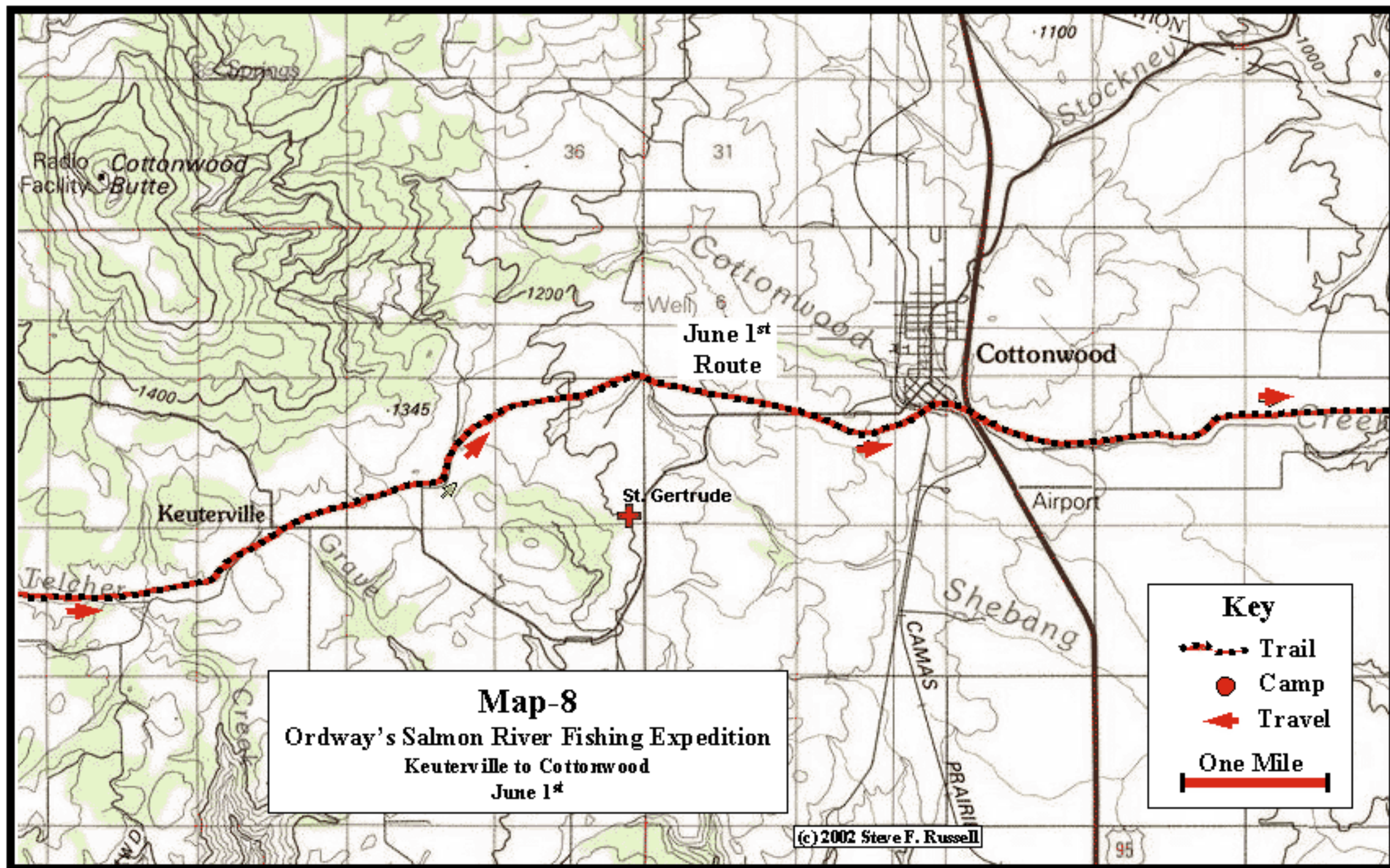
**Key**

- Trail
- Camp
- Travel
- One Mile

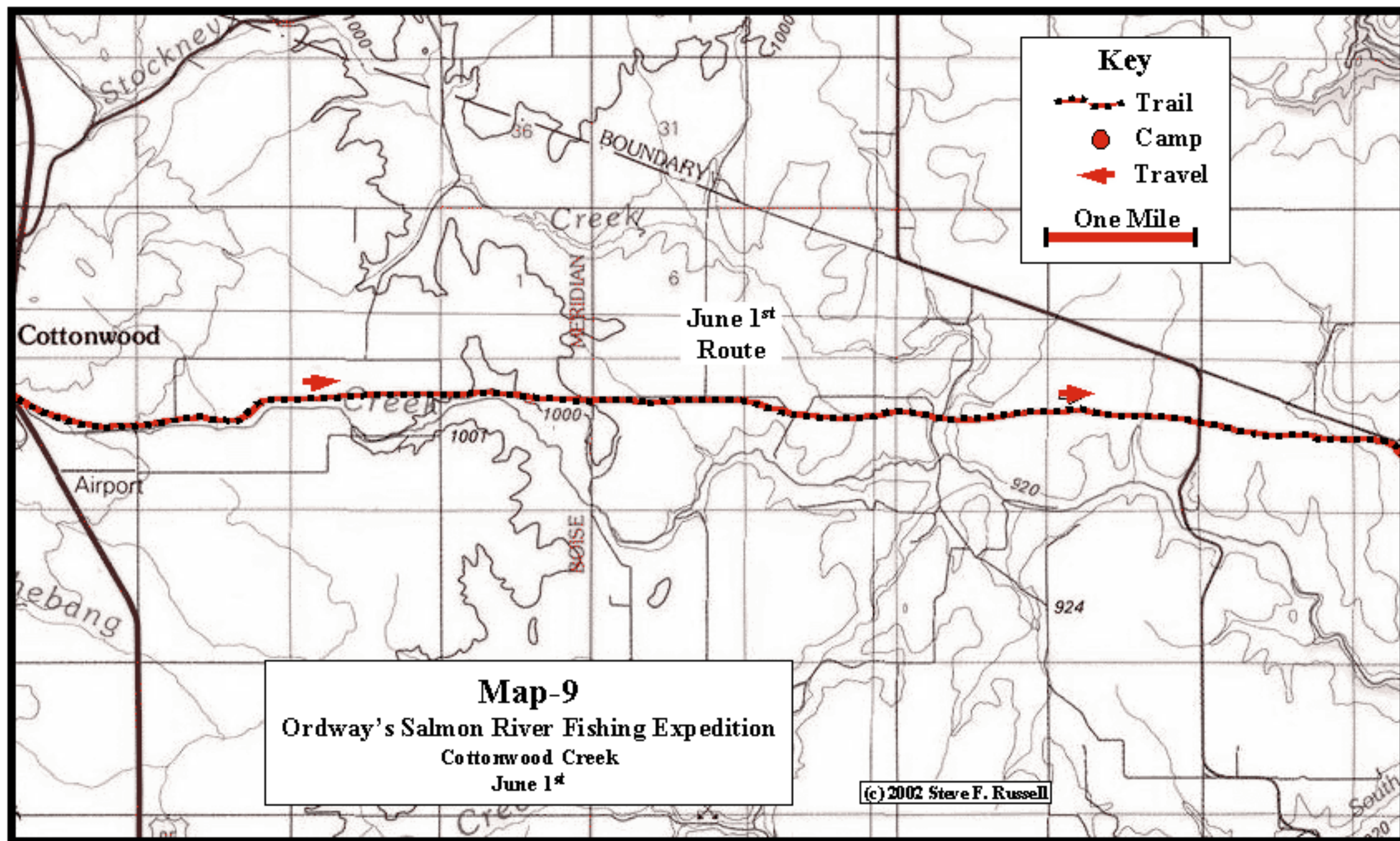




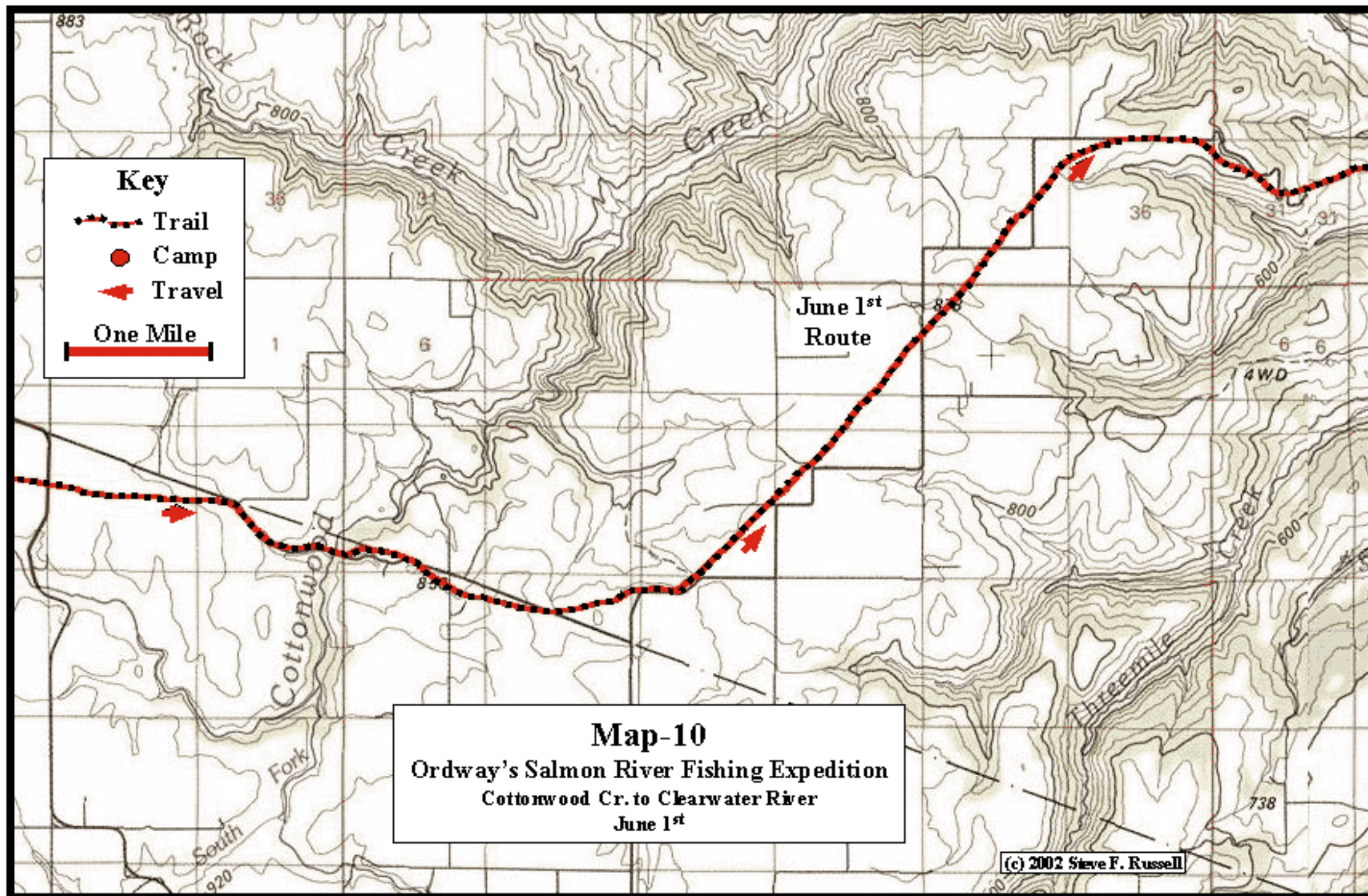




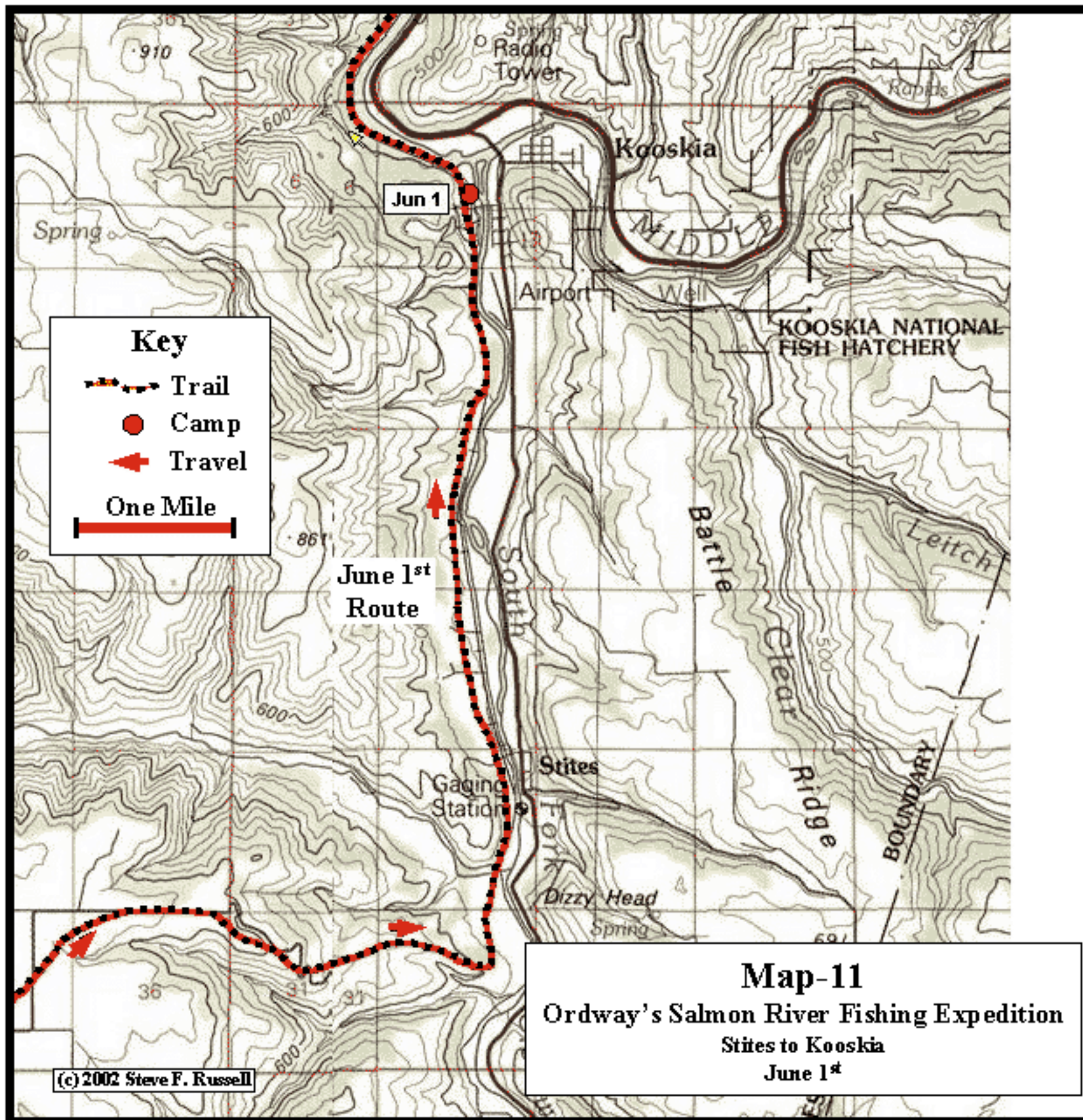




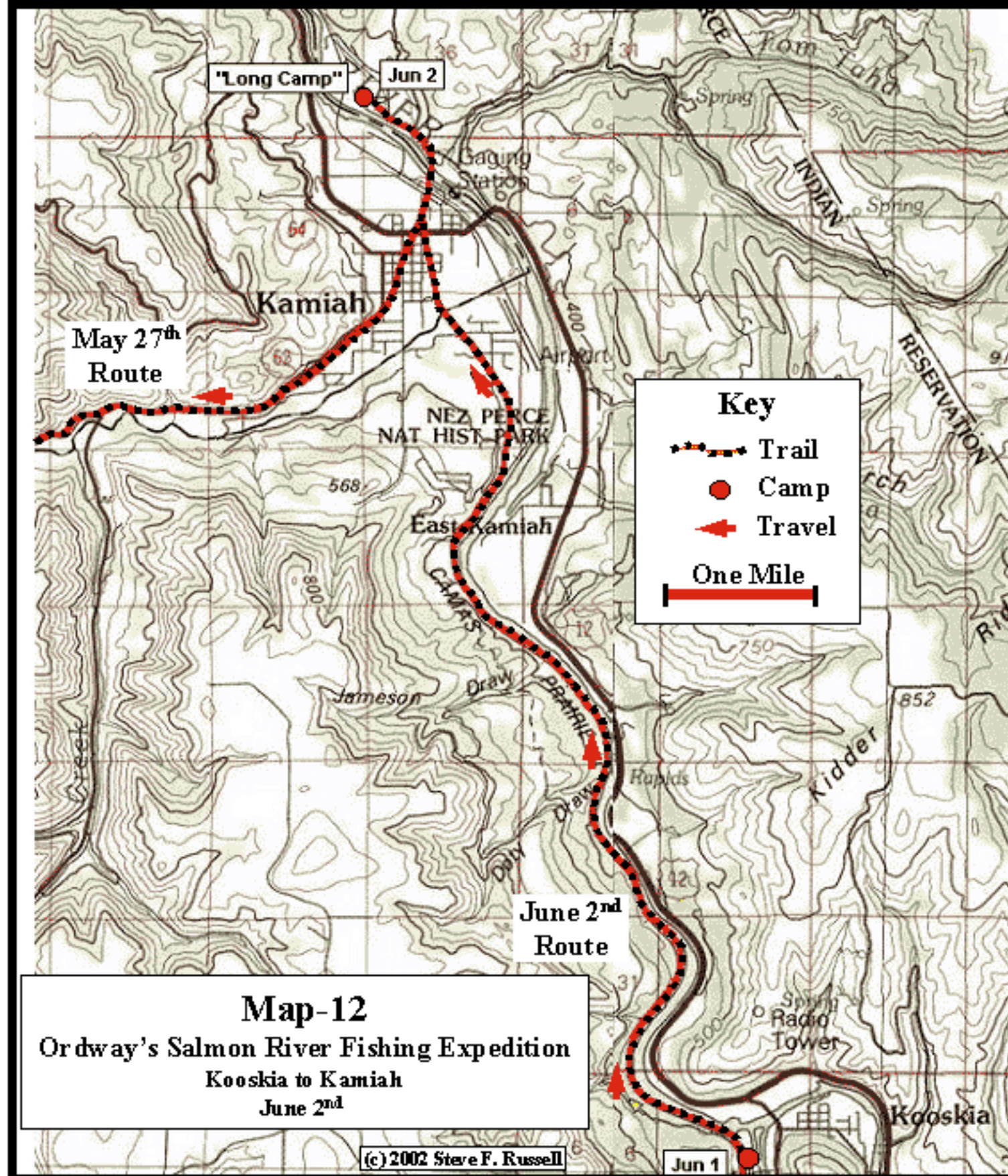














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